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# MODERN PHILOLOGY

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*A Journal* devoted to research in  
Medieval and Modern Literature

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# MODERN PHILOLOGY

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Vol. XLII

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# MODERN PHILOLOGY

Volume XLII

NOVEMBER 1944

Number 2

## CONTEMPORARY TASTE IN THE STAGE DECORATIONS OF LONDON THEATERS, 1770-1800

RUSSELL THOMAS

I CAN find no evidence that scene-painting was regarded seriously in England by the critics of art at any time during the eighteenth century. There were no theories of *mise en scène*. There were no historical records preserved of the achievements of Inigo Jones or of the productions of Lambert, Streeter, De Voto, Servandoni, and other artists of repute who painted for London's several theaters during the early years of the century. The memory of Servandoni's spectacles was still fresh in 1770; and some of his scenes were occasionally taken after that date from the Covent Garden storehouse to decorate new pantomimes. But beyond an occasional sentimental allusion to some of these artists, there is nothing to tell us of their work or their theories of stage decoration. One looks in vain to Reynolds, the friend of Garrick and an interested spectator at the theater, for some account of scenic art as a reflection of taste. We find him speaking of contemporary acting rather than of stage *décor*.<sup>1</sup> Gainsborough once took occasion to write an expression of dis-

approval to Garrick of the excessive use of red, blue, and yellow in his decorations.<sup>2</sup> He was greatly interested in De Louthembourg's Eidophusikon, but otherwise his correspondence showed no more than a casual interest in stage decoration. Horace Walpole, prolific in his notes on painters and painting and frequent commentator upon the stage, wholly ignores scene-painting as an art.<sup>3</sup>

This general absence of serious critical regard for stage *décor* is not surprising. Theatrical managers during the first three quarters of the eighteenth century were not noted for the attention which they gave to the *mise en scène*. Most of the money spent on decoration went into the production of pantomimes and other spectacles. If one is to form any conception of the taste in stage decoration, he must give his attention chiefly to the accounts of these spectacles. Whatever there was of a serious effort on the part of

<sup>2</sup> W. B. Boulton, *Thomas Gainsborough* (Chicago, 1907), pp. 128-29.

<sup>3</sup> Walpole was generally contemptuous of spectacle. A comment in a letter to the Earl of Strafford, November 11, 1774, is characteristic: "Garrick is treating the town as it deserves and likes to be treated, with scenes, fireworks, and his own writing" (*Letters*, ed. Toynbee [Oxford, 1904], IX, 87).

<sup>1</sup> Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Literary works*, ed. Beechy (London, 1858), *Seventh Discourse*, I, 418, and *Thirteenth Discourse*, II, 72-73.

[MODERN PHILOLOGY, November, 1944]

all departments of the theater to achieve a unified and more appropriate *mise en scène* sprang principally from experiments in the staging of spectacles and spread to other more serious productions during the latter years of the century.

Before the appearance of Philippe Jacques de Louthembourg in London in 1773, scant attention appears to have been given to co-ordinating the efforts of author, composer, scene-painter, machinist, and musician, even in the production of spectacles. Nor was this irregularity confined to English theaters alone. A lack of harmony in uniting the forces of the stage apparently prevailed in France, at least as late as 1760, when Jean Georges Noverre published his essays on the ballet. Noverre was one of the few artists of the theater to record his theories of *décor* in the eighteenth century; and his ideas, in view of his later associations with the English stage, have a particular interest. In one essay he writes:

How can it be expected that, so complicated a spectacle as that of the opera, will succeed if the chiefs of the various departments that constitute its very being, act without communicating their thoughts and intentions to each other?

The poet asserts his pretended superiority over the musician; the latter would think it derogatory to his dignity to consult the Ballet-master. The former will not stoop to enter into an explanation with the scene-painter who in his turn communicates only with his inferiors: while the machinist whom he despises, rules despot-like over the journeymen of the opera. Were the poet to set the example, things would soon alter for the better, but full of his self importance, and looking down with contempt on the other arts, his knowledge of them can be but superficial; he is ignorant of the effects which each of them can produce, and of those that may result from their union. On the other hand, the musician takes the poem, runs it over without the least attention, and

giving full career to his imagination, sits down to write the music, which has no real meaning because he did not understand the sense of the work, which he has seen, not perused. . . .

The scene painter, for want of being perfectly acquainted with the subjects of the drama, falls into the greatest error; never consulting with the author, he follows his own ideas; these often militate against the rules of probability which will have everything so disposed as to represent the scene of action. How can he be successful when he does not know the spot where it lies? Yet from such knowledge, and that of the subject, and from these alone, he should form his ideas, otherwise everything will be entirely out of character.

Every nation differs in its laws, manners, customs, modes, and ceremonies: all have not the same taste, the same architecture, nor the same method of cultivating the other arts. The business of the skillful painter is, therefore, to copy that variety. The pencil must be faithful, and, if it is not adapted to the different countries, it swerves from truth and cannot be expected to please.

The person whose province it is to devise the dresses consults with no one; he often supplies the mode of dressing an ancient nation by one in the present fashion; and this only to please the whim of a female singer or dancer of some reputation.

Meanwhile the Ballet-master is acquainted with no particulars. A score is put in his hands, and upon that music he composes his dances, settles the steps and the dances, and gives it any name whatever.

The business of the machinist is to place the painters' work in its proper light, according to the rules of perspective. His first care is to arrange the different parts of the decoration, in so nice an order, that they form together a complete ensemble. And his talent consists in being quick to bring forward and draw back the scenes. Now if he is not sufficiently intelligent to distribute the shades in proper order, the painters' work must lose its merit, and the effect of the decoration be destroyed. Such parts of the scenery which ought to be exposed in a strong light, look dark and black; whilst those which should be shaded

and darkened are in full sight. It is not the great quantity of lamps, placed together as chance directs or even symmetry requires, that gives light to the stage and sets off the scenery. The talent consists in dividing those lights into unequal masses or parts in order to strengthen those places that want a great light, soften those that should have but little, and overlook those that require still less.

As the painter in order to preserve the rules of perspective, is obliged to introduce in his painting shades and lights gradually increasing and decreasing, the man whose business it is to shew them in the proper light, should, methinks, consult with the artist, that the same proportions may be preserved in the distribution of lights. Nothing can be more disagreeable to the eye than a whole scenery in one and the same colour: neither distance nor perspective can be observed. By the same rule, if the paintings, divided into parts, are placed in lights equally forcible, there will exist no distribution, no manner of proportion, and the whole scene will produce no sort of effect. . . . Let the poets come down from their sacred mount: let each artist in his department at the opera, act in concert, and give each other mutual assistance: Then the entertainment is sure to please, will never fail of success.<sup>4</sup>

This is a criticism of the policies of the French theaters, which reputedly surpassed the London theaters in the splendor of their stage effects. Whether Noverre's statement was exaggerated or not, there can be no doubt whatsoever that it would have been a fair charge against the policies of the English theaters at any time prior to 1773.

There is, however, considerable evidence in the press and elsewhere, after

<sup>4</sup> *The works of Monsieur Noverre*, translated from the French (London, 1783), I, 135 ff. Noverre was one of the notable ballet masters of the Continent after the middle of the century. Garrick brought Noverre and his troupe to London in 1753, but the appearance caused the famous Drury Lane riot of that year. In 1781 Noverre came to London as ballet master of the Opera House. He remained there for several

the arrival of De Louthembourg, of an increasing sensitiveness to the possibilities of a better co-ordinated *mise en scène*. One of De Louthembourg's stipulations upon taking the post of designer-in-chief at Drury Lane was that he should be privileged to co-ordinate the efforts of the scene-painters with the costumers, the musicians, and the ballet master and to supervise the machinery of the theater.<sup>5</sup> When he stated these terms, De Louthembourg was thinking of the production of spectacles; but the comments in the periodicals show that occasionally he extended his practice to legitimate drama as well. All accounts show that De Louthembourg was a designer rather than a scene-painter. From his designs the staff of scene-painters prepared the scenes which the artist carefully supervised. He was also the principal machinist of the theater, which post gave him supervision of the lighting and the methods of disposing of all scenes upon the stage.

After De Louthembourg's retirement from Drury Lane in 1781 or 1782 there does not appear to have been a consistent policy even in the staging of spectacles. While the theaters continued to employ the mechanical effects which he devised for lighting and for disposing and removing of settings, the manager of neither major playhouse seems to have invested full authority for the direction of the *mise en scène* in the hands of one artist.<sup>6</sup> The names of several scene-painters appeared in the playbills and they shared equally

<sup>5</sup> These terms are stated in two letters by De Louthembourg addressed to Garrick. The texts of these letters, which have not been published, are included in my unpublished doctoral dissertation "Spectacle in the theatres of London, 1767-1802" (University of Chicago, 1942).

<sup>6</sup> John Inigo Richards was chief of the scenic staff at Covent Garden during most of De Louthembourg's regime at Drury Lane, but there is no evidence that he exercised complete authority there. Thomas Greenwood was the chief scene-painter at Drury Lane from 1781 to 1794.

in the news accounts.<sup>7</sup> Authors frequently stated their gratitude to particular scene-painters and machinists for their co-operation in making the plays successful; but there is no evidence of the concerted direction of all forces until near the end of the century, when Kemble placed the supervision of several of his productions at Drury Lane in the hands of William Capon. The frequent criticism of improprieties and irregularities in the staging of productions is proof that the stage was slow to respond to the theories of Noverre and De Louthembourg.

Even though the *mise en scène* was not so well co-ordinated as it might have been, there was, however, a general improvement in the quality and appropriateness of scenic effects and the efficiency of the machinery with which the super-spectacles were operated.<sup>8</sup> The new thea-

<sup>7</sup> The following extracts from the bills of a few plays are characteristic of the custom of acknowledging the work of the artists:

*The siege of Gibraltar* (C.G., April 26, 1780): "The new scenes by Mr. Richards and Mr. Carver with a view of the English and Spanish fleets entering the Bay."

*The carnival of Venice* (D.L., January 28, 1782): "... to conclude with a view of St. Mark's Palace and a Grand Representation of the Carnival Masquerade. The scenery designed by Mr. De Louthembourg and executed under his direction."

*Macbeth* (D.L., April 21, 1794): "The scenery, machinery, and habits are entirely new. Painters Messrs. Greenwood, Malton, Catton, Capon, Bugario, French, Edwards and their assistants. Machinist Mr. Carbonel. The dresses and decorations are executed by Mr. Johnston."

*Alexander the Great or the conquest of Persia* (D.L., February 12, 1795): "The scenery designed and executed by Mr. Marinari and his assistants. The machinery designed by Mr. Cabanel and executed by him and Mr. Jacobs."

The first edition of John Philip Kemble's *Lodoiska* (London, 1794) contained the following notice: "Act I. The Scene is painted by Mr. GREENWOOD, and his assistants. Act II. The Scene is painted by Mr. MALTON, and Messrs. LUPINO and DEMARIA, his Assistants. Act III. The Scenes are painted by Mr. GREENWOOD; and the Machinery is invented by Mr. CABANEL. The Dresses and Decorations are designed and executed by Mr. JOHNSTONE, and Miss REIN." See also the Preface to Andrew Franklin's operatic spectacle *The Egyptian festival*.

<sup>8</sup> Newspaper criticism frequently recognized both the general improvement and the propriety of scenery,

ters of the last decade of the century, built on a grander scale, gave more scope to the artist and the machinist; and the taste of the time demanded more attention to *décor*. Tate Wilkinson's remark in 1790 that "we have new scenery to almost every piece" was made while contrasting present practice with that of an earlier generation.<sup>9</sup>

Increase of attention to the scenic and mechanical departments of the theaters is not in itself, however, an index to the character of the prevailing taste. In spite of the lack of any formal statements of a theory of *mise en scène*, the character of the taste is evident to anyone who reads the records of the productions. Unmistakably that taste was for a *décor* that was both literal and romantic. Literalism expressed itself in a demand that the appearance of trees and rocks on the stage resemble exactly that of trees and rocks in nature and that a representation of Charing Cross or Westminster Hall on the stage copy accurately the original from which it was taken. The romantic element of current taste expressed itself in a variety of types of settings. There was, first of all, a taste for the picturesque and the sublime, idealized representations

as well as the increasing lavishness of decoration. The following are typical accounts:

*The Count of Narbonne* (trans. Robert Jephson; C.G., 1781); *Morning herald* (November 18, 1781): "The scenery, which was in the Gothic Style, was exceedingly well executed. . . ."

*The choice of Harlequin* (pantomime; C.G., 1781); *Morning chronicle* (January 7, 1782): "... it would be a proof of the great depravity of public taste, if one of the richest exhibitions of beautiful scenery ever shown in a theatre, terminating with so correct and splendid a picture of Eastern manners, failed to produce the most applausive effect."

*Alexander the Great* (ballet-pantomime; D.L., 1795); *Morning chronicle* (February 13, 1795): "At no time could the British Theatre boast of a spectacle so magnificent. . . ." *Oracle* (February 13, 1795): "The marshalling on a first night of four hundred people, the disciplining of horse, the moving of such ponderous machinery—all constitute a difficulty that it is wonderful to find overcome."

<sup>9</sup> *Memoirs of his own life* (York, 1790), IV, 91.

of nature which the stage was pre-eminently fitted to produce. There was also a taste for a representation of the remote parts of the earth: the Orient, the Americas, and distant islands, accounts of which excited popular fancy. Finally, there was a taste for the representation of ancient buildings, particularly Gothic edifices—a taste which was accompanied by an interest in antiquarianism in stage *décor* for perhaps the first time in English theatrical history. In general, the taste in stage *décor* was simply a consistent and logical expression of the early stages of romanticism.<sup>10</sup>

The development of a realistic stage setting which gave the effect of complete illusion required the solution of several technical problems. One of these was the improvement of perspective in scenes. In a system of stage setting which consisted principally of a back scene, or flat, and three or more pairs of side scenes, or wings, with borders to represent the sky or ceiling, it was difficult to create an effective illusion of perspective and to make all the pieces blend to form the im-

pression of a unit. Even under the best of conditions a simple interior setting would produce a correct perspective only if seen from one point of view, usually the exact center of the auditory. Unless each separate wing and flat were painted with due regard to the distances separating them and the particular angle of disposition, the results would be ineffective. The public theaters of London had never known any settings which rivaled the architectural sets devised by the Bibienas and Juvara for Continental theaters. London's scenic artists seem not to have been too successful in achieving skill in perspective before the last quarter of the century. A treatise on perspective drawing by Thomas Malton, in 1775, took the scene-painters to task for their failure to master the science. In a section of his treatise devoted to perspective in scene-painting, Malton says:

That the perspective representation of the inside of a fine building is more difficult to manage than the exterior is certain, and is manifested in theatrical performances; which, being represented on several detached planes, it is impossible by the rules of art, to make them correspond in every point of view; but they are rarely connected in any one point of view. There are, undoubtedly, many fine performances of the kind; yet without attempting to disparage their authors, I am confident, that, were they better acquainted with perspective, they would produce better and more natural representations; even that famed scene in *Cymon* is a jumble of inconsistencies, both in point of design and execution; although, it was a bold attempt out of the common mode of representations. Few artists have made perspective so much their study, to know how to proportion one part to another, on detached scenes, so as to make the whole unite in the proper point of view, whether the representation be internal or external; indeed from the present construction of the theatres, it is hardly possible to be done; nor are the rules of perspective sufficient for the purpose, without a tolerable knowledge of

<sup>10</sup> The character of taste in stage decoration has been treated briefly by some historians of the period. Professor Dougald MacMillan, in commenting on the methods of production employed during part of this period, says: "I suspect that it would be found that the conventional sets of the middle of the century, serving either as a mere background or displaying ingenuity of contrivance (as in the pantomimes), give way gradually to the pictorial, romantic landscape of De Louthembourg, into which the living actors are fitted within the frame of the proscenium" (*Drury Lane calendar, 1747-1776* [Oxford, 1938], *Introd.*, p. xxix n.). Professor Nicoll says of the new tendency in scenic art during the last half of the century that it is "both romantic and realistic, striking well away from the conventional neo-classicism of former years." Of the realistic aspect of the movement, he says that it assumes two forms, "the one leading towards the attempt to secure complete illusion in the theatre, the other drawing the manager and the painter towards antiquarian efforts" (see *A history of late eighteenth century drama* [Cambridge, 1927], p. 29). By 1770 the taste for a realistic-romantic type of setting was well defined and was the dominant note in stage decorations throughout the remainder of the century. A genuine antiquarian interest did not appear noticeably until late in the period, however.



lines, geometrically. It is the least qualification of a scene painter to be excellent in landscape, in which a small knowledge of perspective is requisite; but in order to execute designs in architecture with correctness, and a just proportion of the several parts, requires a thorough knowledge of perspective. It is somewhat surprising, that all who are concerned or in any way engaged in scene-painting, do not make perspective their immediate study; being the basis, the very soul and existence of their profession; yet to my certain knowledge, several artists employed in it, are not only totally ignorant of it, in theory, but they are almost wholly unacquainted with its rules, which, to me, is unaccountable.<sup>11</sup>

As long as decorations remained primarily a background of action, not much attention needed to be given to such details. As the action withdrew more and more into the frame of the proscenium and the settings assumed greater importance to the action, it was natural that the audience should show greater regard for the correctness of the illusion. The notion of the stage as a picture in which the actors were the moving figures was voiced by Noverre. "Any decoration whatever," he declared, "is a picture ready to receive a number of figures. The performers and dancers are the personages to adorn and embellish it. But in order that the picture may please and gratify the sight, every compounding part must appear in just and exact proportions."<sup>12</sup> The audiences were quick to recognize that the application of the principle produced more natural or realistic performances. Whatever destroyed the illusion of naturalness in

the stage picture was henceforth open to criticism, and whatever increased the effectiveness of the picture was worthy of praise. It is significant that the first attempts at Drury Lane and Covent Garden to abandon the proscenium doors were made during this period.<sup>13</sup>

Nothing in De Louthembourg's achievements excited more comment than his management of perspective and his success in creating the illusion of great distances. O'Keeffe says he was the first artist to "break the scene into several pieces, by the laws of perspective, showing miles and miles of distance."<sup>14</sup> The reviews of his spectacles rarely failed to observe his success in handling perspective. It must be conceded that most of his settings were landscapes rather than architecture. By the use of a great many ground-rows, cut-cloths, and drop curtains, which were painted to fit together, he succeeded in achieving effects entirely new to the theater audiences of his day. The remarkable perspective of the Naval Review at Portsmouth, his first London spectacle, was one of the features which astonished the audience. In this production every ship was constructed "distinct from the back scene," and the effect in point of perspective was such that one could "scarcely give human invention credit for the execution."<sup>15</sup> Of a setting for Mrs. Cowley's comedy, *The runaway*, a reviewer wrote:

The piece was decorated by an excellent garden scene, painted by that great master De Louthembourg, who has the honour of being

<sup>11</sup> Thomas Malton, *A compleat treatise on perspective in theory and practice on the principles of Dr. Brook Taylor* (London, 1775), Book III, sec. 10, pp. 217 ff.

<sup>12</sup> I, 89. In the long passage from Noverre's work which I have previously cited, the author makes very clear his notion that the chief end of the stage picture is a literal fidelity to nature. Observe that he remarks upon the importance of correct perspective in achieving this end.

<sup>13</sup> Between the years 1780 and 1783 both Drury Lane and Covent Garden experimented with a proscenium which omitted stage doors (see the *Morning chronicle*, September 18, 1780, September 17, 1782; the *Morning herald*, September 19, 1783).

<sup>14</sup> *Recollections of the life of John O'Keeffe* (London, 1826), II, 114.

<sup>15</sup> *Lloyd's evening post*, October 8-11, 1773, and *London chronicle*, October 9-12, 1773. The spectacle was first produced as a finale to a revival of Thomson's masque, *Alfred*, on October 9, 1773.



the first artist who showed our theatre directors that by a just disposition of light and shade, and a critical preservation of perspective, the eye of a spectator might be so effectually deceived in a playhouse, as to be induced to take the produce of art for pure nature.<sup>16</sup>

The success of the more colossal spectacles of the last decade in which puppet troops and processions filled the stage was to a large extent dependent upon the mastery of perspective. Noverre describes a device by which he adapted his dancers to the background by grading them according to their height. After describing a ballet setting by Servandoni in which a company of hunters crossed a bridge which was much too small for the men and which therefore destroyed the illusion, he gives an account of his efforts to remedy the difficulty in one of his own productions:

The scene was a forest whose roads were in a line parallel with the spectator. The prospect terminated with a bridge, and behind it a landscape at a considerable distance. I divided this entree into six distinct classes, each of these composed of three couples, in all, thirty six figures. The highest in stature traversed the walk nearest to the spectators. The next were those seen crossing the following road. The third was filled with the third class, and so on until the last or sixth class, ended the race, by going over the bridge. The degrees of proportion were so strictly observed, as to deceive the eye; and that which was the result only of art and good management seemed perfectly in nature. Nay the deception was such that the spectators thought the lessening of the objects proceeded from their distance, and imagined that the very same couples went through the different roads. The music was perfectly adapted to the subject, and fell off gradually as the hunters advanced into the forest, which was extensive, and painted with exquisite taste. Such is, my dear sir, the illusion which stage effect will pro-

duce when it is consonant in every part, and when the artist takes nature for his model.<sup>17</sup>

Some such adaptation of the figures in a procession to the background must have been employed in the procession in *Bluebeard* at Drury Lane in 1798.<sup>18</sup>

Though the efforts at improving perspective were undertaken as part of the effort to produce a perfect illusion of reality, they left room for considerable criticism. James Boaden, who was as familiar with the workings of the stage as anyone in his time, commented on the inadequacies and voiced a theory of *décor* which was distinctly counter to the prevailing tendency of his generation. Speaking particularly of the settings for tragedy and comedy, he wrote:

But neither tragedy nor comedy ever seemed with me to derive a benefit proportioned to the pains that have been taken in the scenic department of our stages. When the scenes are first drawn on, or the roller descends, the work exhibited is considered a few moments as a work of art—the persons who move before it then engross the attention,—at their exit it is raised or drawn off, and is speedily forgotten, or seen with indifference the second time. If the perspective, as to the actor standing in front of the scene, was so accurate that the whole effect should be delusive, and the impression be of actual sky, and land, and building, (though an objection will always remain to the abrupt junction of the borders with the tops of the scenes—the wings, and the scoring lines where the flats meet each other,—the grooves in which they move, the boarded stage and other difficulties hitherto insurmountable,) I could understand the object of those who spend so much money on their elaboration—but I confess I am of the opinion, that they should never do more than suggest to the imagination; and that it would not be desirable that the spectator should lose his senses to the point of forgetting that he is in a regular theatre, and

<sup>17</sup> I, 97-98.

<sup>18</sup> *Morning chronicle and Oracle*, January 17, 1798.

<sup>16</sup> *Morning chronicle*, February 16, 1776.

enjoying a work of art invented for his amusement and instruction by a poet, and acted by another artist of corresponding talent called a player. All beyond this is the dream of ignorance and inexperience.<sup>19</sup>

Boaden's ideas did not seriously divert any designer of stage scenery from his effort to secure the illusion of reality, at least during the first half of the nineteenth century.

During the last quarter of the eighteenth century, color and lighting were more seriously studied, particularly the effects of lighting. Noverre was persuaded that in the perfect stage picture the colors of dresses and scenery should be properly adapted to each other, so that neither would destroy the effect of the other.<sup>20</sup> His ideas on the distribution of light have already been cited. De Louthembourg's interest in lighting is quite as evident as his interest in perspective.<sup>21</sup> While some of his innovations were mere spectacular tricks, it is apparent from the review of his production of *The runaway* that he was as much concerned with the whole problem of the distribution and control of light as was Noverre. Throughout the last two decades of the century there was a steady effort to secure a more natural lighting behind the proscenium. A text on theatrical architecture, published in Paris in 1801, contained a chapter entitled "De la manière d'éclairer la salle, sans nuire trop aux effets de la scène et du théâtre." Among the pertinent comments is the following paragraph:

La distribution des lumières entre les châssis de décorations, les plafonds et les toiles,

<sup>19</sup> *The memoirs of Mrs. Siddons* (2d ed.; London, 1831), II, 292-93. Boaden's comments, though not published until 1837, were given in discussing the staging problems of Drury Lane's company when it moved to the Opera House in 1791.

<sup>20</sup> I, 90-92.

<sup>21</sup> In my dissertation I have discussed at some length De Louthembourg's interest in stage lighting. His innovations have been commented upon by all historians of the eighteenth-century theater.

a constamment pour règle les intentions du décorateur, qui a en lui-même pour principe de poser ses masses comme l'a indiqué le sujet de l'ouvrage. Ainsi donc le théâtre doit s'éclairer avec intelligence, et conformément aux décorations qui y paraissent.<sup>22</sup>

This is simply a restatement of Noverre's theory and De Louthembourg's practice. Without inquiring into the methods of operating the lights of the stage, we can be sure that there was a constant increase in the volume of light placed at the disposal of the machinists, that the machinists learned better how to mass lights at different areas of the stage while keeping other areas in shadow, and that they made some progress in mastering the control of both the color and the volume of light during a scene.<sup>23</sup> It is reasonable to suppose that the demands of the grander types of spectacles, which were full of dungeons, illuminated pavilions, picturesque moonlight scenes, etc., had been chiefly responsible for encouraging such experimentation.

The importance of proper lighting was recognized by the journalists throughout the whole of the last quarter of the century. They were quick to recognize invention and quick to challenge improprieties leading to unrealistic effects. The *Morning chronicle* was especially alive to irregularities. On January 5, 1782, the

<sup>22</sup> C. Boulet, *Essai sur l'art de construire les théâtres, leurs machines et leurs mouvements* (Paris, 1801), p. 94.

<sup>23</sup> An increase in the price of admission at Covent Garden in 1792 was defended by a correspondent in the *Morning chronicle* on the grounds of increase in production costs. The writer asserted that lights alone, in oils and candles, had increased in cost since 1762 from £700 to £1400 per year because of their increased number as well as the increased cost of the sperm. In Gainsborough's letter to Garrick, referred to above, there is a reference to Garrick's increase in lighting. Reviews of De Louthembourg's productions frequently make reference to his abundant use of light. See also the text of Burgoyne's *Maid of the oaks* (London, 1777), p. 12, in which the characters comment on the great number of lamps needed for the fête and also upon the uses of the lamps in particular scenes.

critic of that paper praised the managers for increasing the volume of light the preceding evening, since it "is a circumstance of so much consequence on a stage where De Louthembourg's talents are exerted." Failure to conform to the demands of the text of *Romeo and Juliet* in lighting the tomb scene and the procession at Covent Garden in 1781 was severely criticized. By leaving the stage and side lights on during that scene, the critic said, "the torches . . . seemed superfluous; when Paris withdrew, desiring 'Night to muffle him awhile,' he appeared perfectly wise in walking off in search of darkness, for the audience saw nothing but a semblance of broad daylight about the tomb."<sup>24</sup> These and similar criticisms indicate how much the audiences had come to expect in the way of naturalness and propriety in the use of stage lighting.

The striving toward a realistic setting was served by other factors than the technical progress in perspective painting and in lighting. One of these was the interest in pictorial and descriptive information about particular places. The immense volume of travel literature—scientific, pseudo-scientific, and aesthetic—reflects an interest in the particularities of nature, as opposed to its ideal or universal qualities. This aspect of taste is both romantic and realistic. It is romantic in its inclination toward the remote and singular; it is realistic in its inclination toward some degree of topographical and architectural verisimilitude. Explorers like Cook were accompanied in their travels by artists and draftsmen, who brought back paintings and sketches of the landscapes, buildings, costumes, and crafts of peoples in remote places of the earth. These artistic efforts had a very considerable effect upon spectacles, notably in such productions as *Omai* (Covent Garden, 1785), for

which De Louthembourg devised scenes from John Webber's paintings made on Cook's third voyage, and in *Ramah Droog* (Covent Garden, 1798), for which Richards and his staff at Covent Garden made scenes from Thomas Daniell's drawings of Indian landscape and architecture. For *The choice of Harlequin* (Covent Garden, 1782) Richards painted scenes of an Asiatic background from drawings by Tilly Kettle. Nearly all works of the more aesthetic type of travel literature—the "tours" of picturesque landscapes in England and on the Continent—were written by men who had some interest in drawing and who preserved a pictorial record of their travels. The taste for this type of pictorial art was reflected on the stage in the countless scenes of particular spots noted for their picturesque beauty. A pantomime, *The wonders of Derbyshire*, was perhaps the most elaborate spectacle of the kind.<sup>25</sup>

Coincident with the taste for historical romances and medieval horror tales, a taste for settings which laid some claims to architectural and historical accuracy developed. One of the scene-painters who gave considerable impetus to the taste for architecturally correct scenes was Michael Angelo Rooker, chief designer

<sup>25</sup> *The wonders of Derbyshire* (Drury Lane, 1779) was one of De Louthembourg's greatest successes. The theater paid the artist's expenses to Derbyshire to enable him to make sketches for the scenes in this pantomime. De Louthembourg's model for one of its scenes is in the possession of Frank Arlton, Esq., of London. A photograph of it is reproduced in my dissertation. Other productions which contained scenes of places noted for their picturesque or their sublime character were *Hartford bridge* by William Pearce; *The travellers in Switzerland* by Henry Bate Dudley; a pantomime, *Mother Shipton*, which contained some scenes of notable spots in Yorkshire; and another pantomime, *The Giant Causeway*, whose Irish scenes are suggested by the title. For a short time the pantomimes were little more than travelogues or "tours." *Harlequin traveller* was built around scenes of Paris; *Harlequin touchstone* exhibited scenes of Rome; and, while *Harlequin everywhere* did not altogether live up to its title, it was one of the few productions to exhibit scenes of North America.

<sup>24</sup> *Morning chronicle*, September 25, 1781.

for the Haymarket from about 1778 until the last years of the century. Little notice has been given to Rooker's work, but it is evident from reviews that the architectural character and the general correctness of his scenes were a chief source of appeal. Aside from his work as a scene-painter, he was well known as a painter of architectural ruins. The *Diary* stated in 1790 that it knew "not an artist who possesses a pencil more skillful and correct" than Rooker's.<sup>26</sup> For the scenes of Colman's play, *The mountaineers*, the *Thespian magazine* had the warmest praise, declaring that "Mr. Rooker has established his reputation long ago for the beauty of his scenery, or his last efforts alone would have won the laurel. The distinctions of situation, time, costume, and architecture, so rarely attended to by the painters at the winter theatres, are here observed with critical exactness."<sup>27</sup>

It was William Capon, however, who brought the taste for antiquarian research most forcibly to the attention of theater audiences. Supported by Kemble, he produced for more than two decades in the London theaters scenes chiefly of notable buildings in and about London. Among the more remarkable productions for which he executed scenes before the end of the century were *Macbeth* (1794), *The Cherokee* (1794), *The iron chest* (1796), *Vortigern* (1796), *The plain dealer* (1796), and *De Montfort* (1800).<sup>28</sup> Boaden's account of the

scenery for *De Montfort* shows the scale upon which Capon worked.

Every care was taken in the decoration of *De Montfort*. Capon painted a very unusual pile of scenery, representing a church of the 14th century with its nave, choir, and side aisles, magnificently decorated; consisting of seven planes in succession. In width this extraordinary elevation was about 56 feet, 52 in depth, and 37 feet in height. It was positively a building.<sup>29</sup>

Despite Capon's successes, many of the productions pretending to some degree of historical accuracy in the details of their settings failed to receive the approbation of those who claimed an interest in antiquarianism. Between the years 1799 and 1802 the *Gentleman's magazine* published at irregular intervals a series of "Critiques" entitled "Of the impropriety of theatrical representations as far as they relate to the scenery, dresses, and decorations, when brought forward as illustrations of the antient history of this country." They were signed by "An artist and an antiquary." The first two of the Critiques were analyses of the staging of two spectacles, *Feudal times* and *The castle spectre*. The author began the first article with a general criticism of scenic improprieties:

Of the many deceptions passed upon the publick, those of the Theatre, when they attempt any performance of old English customs: and manners, are none of the least; and I am free to declare, that I never witnessed a piece got up with any tolerable degree of attention either to our antient buildings, dresses, or decorations. A strange jumble of ideas, brought together by the various artists, mechanics, and tradesmen, of the Theatres, caught by transitory glimpses at a few of our antient buildings and pictures, and mixed with

Some of Capon's most spectacular work was produced after 1809, when Kemble opened the new Covent Garden.

<sup>29</sup> *Life of Kemble*, II, 257.

<sup>26</sup> July 17, 1790.

<sup>27</sup> September, 1793, p. 214.

<sup>28</sup> William Capon served an apprenticeship in scene-painting at the Royalty and at the Royal Circus before Kemble brought him to Drury Lane. For the most extensive accounts of his work see Boaden's *Memoirs of the life of John Philip Kemble* (London, 1825); and W. J. Lawrence, "The pioneers of modern English stage mounting: William Capon," *Magazine of art*, XVIII (June, 1895), 289-92. Lawrence states that Capon was scenic director of Drury Lane after 1794. This is doubtful, I think. The majority of the productions were designed by Thomas Greenwood and his son, if the evidence of the playbills is correct.



their presuming notions of improving on what antient objects they have thus so superficially noticed, are held up to the publick as faithful copies of our antient *costume*.<sup>30</sup>

After asserting that he had for a long time attempted to bring this fault to the attention of the managers of the theaters, he proceeded to an account of the recent production of *Feudal times*. Act I, scene 1, represented a castle situated in a lake, as seen from an adjoining village. Of this scene he wrote:

The architecture of the castle was too undetermined to mark any of our antient styles; and I perceived, in the base part of the walls and towers, arches for admittance of boats and barges in and out of the castle. In all the remains of castles in the various parts of the kingdom I never witnessed this *convenience*; and I have hitherto understood, both from antient MSS and from our castles, either ruinous or perfect, that the only way to pass in or out of such buildings, was over the bridges, and through the first gate of entrance belonging to them.

Of the makes of the barges and boats we must refer to those seen on the Thames at this day.<sup>31</sup>

Each scene is examined in careful detail. Concerning the final scene, in which an exploding mine had attracted the fulsome praises of the press generally, he protested against the use of gunpowder for the explosion of the mine, since its use was unknown in England before the fourteenth century.

In his fourth Critique, the "Antiquarian" turned his attention to the productions of Shakespeare. Why, he asked, do we see Shakespeare's plays produced "without the smallest attention either to our antient *costume*, or a decent expenditure to render them respectable to audiences familiarized to a continual display

of rich and magnificent spectacles, under the titles of serious operas, ballet dances, and pantomimes?"<sup>32</sup> He declared that their "getting-up" brings them "near the brink of contempt and ridicule." He then turns to an examination of a production of *Richard the Third* at Drury Lane given during the current season. Since Kemble was giving more attention at this time to historical details in the production of Shakespeare than had any of his predecessors, the comments are all the more interesting. The writer calls the costumes a jumble made up from fancy and from portraits of Charles I's days. He describes a scene depicting the Tower as "one of the most unaccountable apologies for the architecture of the fifteenth century that can possibly be conceived; a huddle of compartments, cornices, arches, pilasters, &c. of every style that the painter had ever seen."<sup>33</sup> Act III, scene 1, represents "the Palace" which, the writer says, surely ought to mean Westminster, but no view of any part of Westminster was forthcoming. "It is true, the artist, by selecting exact copies of our antient architecture, and exhibiting them here, has shewn his good sense and true taste; but why was he not directed by the managers to take his scene from Westminster-Hall, he being, from this proof of skill, so well enabled to perfect such an undertaking?"<sup>34</sup> The writer then makes a charge startlingly similar to that of Noverre's criticism forty years earlier. Managers, actors, and artists, he says, never "take counsel together," so as to give the whole performance its due appropriate effect. . . . the artist is told to paint such and such a scene without ever being told for what purpose it is

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, LXX, Part I (April, 1800), 318.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 320.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 520. The artist referred to was undoubtedly Capon.

<sup>33</sup> *Gentleman's magazine*, LXIX, Part I (February, 1799), 113.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

intended."<sup>35</sup> Altogether, the articles comprise one of the most interesting commentaries which have been preserved on the *mise en scène* of the English theater in the late eighteenth century.

More pervasive than the taste for the singular and the particular in nature and the taste for historical and geographical verisimilitude was the taste for the picturesque. From the beginning of this period to its end, no term appears in the vocabulary of theatrical critics more frequently than the word "picturesque." It was used with the same freedom and ambiguity in theatrical criticism as in the general literature of the times. Almost every sort of landscape was described as picturesque, and certainly none of the professional dramatic critics appears to have employed the term in so precise a sense as that in which Gilpin had defined it.<sup>36</sup> Any stage setting which reminded the critic of the landscapes of Claude Lorrain, Poussin, Rosa, or Gaspar in any respect was "picturesque." There was little distinction of any kind drawn between the sublime and the picturesque. In short, so far as theatrical criticism went, the term was a categorical name for almost any romantic exterior setting.

Despite the broad use of the term in the theatrical criticism, there can be no doubt that, even in its narrowest and technically most correct sense, it applied properly to many of the exterior settings

of the period. Since the principal scene-designers of the last quarter of the century were men who enjoyed considerable reputation as artists of the picturesque school outside the theater, it was inevitable that they should carry that tradition to the playhouse.<sup>37</sup> Although the stage was well adapted to highly formalized, symmetrical garden scenes, it was equally well adapted to picturesque landscape. The proscenium formed a natural frame, and the wings were the inevitable side screens of irregular rocks, trees, cottages, etc., conventionally employed in all picturesque art. Ground-rows and cut-cloths assisted in building up the foreground and middle distance, while the back scene was a fine perspective view of mountains, lake, or seacoast. Once the artists had mastered the trick of breaking up the scene to give the illusion of great depth, the opportunities of painting effective sets in the picturesque style were greatly enhanced. With a fair degree of realism in the painting and lighting, nature could scarcely be seen in the theater except as "picture-like."

The texts of the plays are not always helpful in describing their landscape settings. Some of the authors, however, give the reader a detailed account of the kind of scene they envision. Mrs. Brooke's comic opera, *Rosina* (Covent Garden, 1782), opens with a scene which

discovers a rural prospect: on the left side a little hill with trees at the top; a spring of water rushes from the side, and falls into a

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* The conclusion of this essay deals chiefly with costume. The writer makes a direct plea to Kemble to improve the scenic department of the theater.

<sup>36</sup> William Gilpin, *Three essays: on picturesque beauty; on picturesque travel; and on sketching landscape* (London, 1792). The essays were written many years before their publication. Gilpin carefully defines the kind of beauty appropriate to the picturesque style and is at pains to make clear that while roughness as opposed to smoothness is appropriate to the picturesque, the singular and fantastic aspects of nature are by no means favorite objects of the picturesque landscape painter (see Essay II, in Gilpin's *Works* [3d ed.; London, 1808], I, 43).

<sup>37</sup> See Elizabeth Manwaring, *Italian landscape in 18th century England* (New York, 1925), pp. 73, 108. Miss Manwaring's discussion of the cult of the picturesque and C. W. Hussey's work, *The picturesque* (London, 1927), make brief references to the reflection of the taste for the picturesque in stage scenery. Hussey says that De Louthembourg is "perhaps the greatest painter who can be set down as picturesque" (p. 259). Miss Manwaring properly describes De Louthembourg as a follower in the manner of Salvator Rosa. His paintings and drawings show a taste for the wild and rugged aspects of nature.



natural bason below: on the right side a cottage at the door of which is a bench of stone. At a distance a chain of mountains. The manor-house in view. A field of corn fills up the scene.<sup>38</sup>

Sheridan's *Pizarro* also contained several landscapes of the picturesque and more ruggedly sublime variety. Other authors describe scenes in less detail but in terms that leave little doubt about the picturesque effect. Charles Dibdin's comic opera, *The Quaker* (Drury Lane, 1777), contained a scene which was "an irregular hill carried quite to the back of the stage, so situated that Lubin, who comes from it during the symphony of the duet, is sometimes seen and sometimes concealed by the trees. A cottage on one side near the front."<sup>39</sup> Colman's *The mountaineers* contained many mountainous landscapes, one of which is described as "part of the Sierra de Ronda. In one part of the scene, a cave overgrown with bushes: in another, a rude bank with stumps of trees. (Daybreak)."<sup>40</sup> Scenes such as these could be enumerated by the score. Nearly every pantomime contained two or three such landscapes, even when the entertainment was not expressly built around such pictorial display.

The reviews give further evidence of the wide use of picturesque settings as well as proof of their popularity. When *The Christmas tale* was brought out at Drury Lane in 1776 as an afterpiece, the *Morning chronicle* stated that "those who delight in a representation teeming with instances of the sublime, the beautiful, and the surprising, in scenery and machinery, will be highly entertained."<sup>41</sup> The same paper said of *The battle of Hastings* (Drury Lane, 1778) that "nothing

could be more picturesque than the opening scene, representing the gate of an old castle on the one side, a wood on the other, and the moon in perspective through the trees."<sup>42</sup> Of O'Keeffe's opera, *The castle of Andalusia* (Covent Garden, 1782), a lavishly staged operatic spectacle that bordered on the melodramatic, the *Morning post* reported that the opening scene had "a bold and picturesque effect, worthy even of Mortimer's pencil."<sup>43</sup>

Picturesque scenes continued to be in favor into the next century. From England the taste spread to France.<sup>44</sup> In London the stage settings of Clarkson Stanfield and David Roberts, in particular, continued the style into the second quarter of the nineteenth century.

Despite imperfections which resulted from a limited mastery of the techniques of stage design and an often imperfect knowledge of the content which was being represented in the stage picture, the aim of the scenic artists of the last quarter of the eighteenth century is clear. Their technical objective was to secure an illusion of nature. The subject matter of the stage settings was a representation of the picturesque and sublime in nature and of scenes remote in space and time.

It is interesting that these objectives achieved their finest expression in a me-

<sup>38</sup> January 26, 1778.

<sup>39</sup> November 12, 1782. John Hamilton Mortimer, A.R.A., like De Loutherboug, was inclined toward the style of Rosa. He was immensely admired for his gloomy scenes of caverns and rugged scenery.

<sup>40</sup> See Marie-Antoinette Allévy, *La Mise en scène en France dans la première moitié du dix-neuvième siècle* (Paris, 1938). In discussing the growth of spectacles, scenic novelties, and the demand for a multiplicity of scenes within a single spectacle on the nineteenth-century French stage, the author attributes the origins to the English: "C'est le triomphe du mouvement, de la nature et du 'pittoresque.' Un terme qui va faire fortune au théâtre et auquel s'accouple déjà le mot 'romantique' dont les Anglais faisaient depuis longtemps usage pour exprimer le caractère des sites sauvages, mystérieux, terrifiants, plongeant l'imagination de spectateur dans la mélancolie ou dans l'horreur" (p. 23).

<sup>38</sup> (12th ed.; London, 1788), p. 7.

<sup>39</sup> (London, 1777), p. 1.

<sup>40</sup> (2d ed.; London, 1795), p. 47.

<sup>41</sup> October 19, 1776.

chanical exhibition, the Eidophusikon, invented and exhibited by De Loutherbourog about the time that he left the employment of Drury Lane.<sup>45</sup> The stages of

<sup>45</sup> The Eidophusikon was first exhibited in 1781. It became a sensation immediately and was exhibited for several seasons. The fame of its inventor and the merit of the invention brought it an attention far exceeding the ordinary mechanical novelties exhibited in the city. The titles of a few of the scenes exhibited suggest their romantic character: "Sunset, a view over Naples"; "Moonlight, a view of the Mediterranean, the rising of the moon contrasted with the effect of fire"; "Niagara Falls." To exquisite details in the construction of parts of the setting and to care in management of color and light, De Loutherbourog managed to add sound effects which led one commentator to speak of his developing the "picturesque of sound." For detailed accounts of the exhibition see the *Morning herald*, February 26 and March 1, 1781, and the *European magazine*, March, 1782, pp. 181-82.

the public theaters were not yet equipped to produce on a grand scale the remarkable effects which De Loutherbourog achieved on his small stage, but there can be no doubt that the scene-designers were striving to attain the same end.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> The *London chronicle* (August 30-September 1, 1785) recognized the influence of the Eidophusikon in a review of a pantomime at the Haymarket. *Here, there and everywhere*: "The scenery is executed with great art particularly in imitation of the moving pictures of the Eidophusikon. From a clear sunshine the scene is gradually obscured with a thick fog . . . and this gradually disperses again." The *Morning chronicle* calls the fog a new phenomenon in stage machinery, but De Loutherbourog had manipulated it on his stage by the use of gauze curtains and lights.

## EMERSON'S LITERARY METHOD

WALTER BLAIR AND CLARENCE FAUST

### I

**D**URING the period of more than a century which has passed since Emerson set up as an author, critics have agreed pretty well in both their praise and their censure of his method of writing. As early as 1844 so sympathetic a critic as Carlyle revealed the pattern. Emerson's sentences, he said, were excellent—"Pure genuine Saxon; strong and simple; of a clearness, of a beauty." But beyond the sentence Carlyle looked in vain for signs of unity and coherence. Instead of being a "beaten ingot," each paragraph was "a beautiful bag of duck-shot held together by canvas."<sup>1</sup> In speaking of Emerson's writings, scholars in general have seen that single lines and sentences were admirable but, as a rule, have failed to find much unity or order in a poem or essay as a whole.

There are, however, some rather interesting minority reports. W. T. Harris, for example, in 1882, found that at least some works of the Concord philosopher-poet were bound together by "logical unity," by "organic unity" of a Platonic kind, or by both; and to back his claims Harris analyzed some works in detail.<sup>2</sup> Later, in 1890, Charles J. Woodbury, after puzzling about the lawlessness of Emerson according to the rhetorical principles which he had learned at Williams

College, found in the Socratic dialogues of Plato and the discourses of Coleridge "object-lessons disclosing Emerson's secret of advancing by a natural instead of the artificial order I had been trained in."<sup>3</sup> Still later, Charles Malloy, in a series of articles, offered detailed analyses of Emerson's poems to show that "the more one gets out into the broad cognition where Emerson gets his thoughts, the more he sees cohesion and structural integrity."<sup>4</sup> Malloy found a particularly useful clue to Emerson's structure in the *Bhagavat Gita*. Since this clue was the Platonic concept of Identity, he concluded that Emerson was "born to Plato and had him by organization and by temperament";<sup>5</sup> and frequently in expounding Emerson's poems, Malloy, like Harris and Woodbury before him, found Plato useful.

Thus Plato, long recognized as a contributor to Emerson's philosophy, has been a useful guide to at least three searchers for Emerson's literary method. We believe that Plato will be similarly useful to other searchers, particularly if they begin, not with the Platonic dia-

<sup>1</sup> *Talks with Ralph Waldo Emerson* (New York, 1890), pp. 150-52.

<sup>2</sup> "Second paper, 'The apology,'" in Charles Malloy, *The poems of Emerson* (Boston: The author, 1900). The pages in this volume are not numbered. Evidently they were privately printed from the type used in the series of articles on Emerson's poems published by Malloy in *The coming age*, Vols. I-III, between February, 1899, and July, 1900. Other poems were analyzed in *The arena*, XXXI (January-June, 1904), 138-52, 272-83, 370-80, 494-507, 502-602; XXXII (July-December, 1904), 39-48, 145-51, 278-83.

<sup>3</sup> "Third paper, 'Brahma.'" The idea of identity, Malloy thought, was "condensed into the poem, 'Brahma.'"

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Emerson, November 3, 1844 (*The correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and Ralph Waldo Emerson* [Boston, 1897], II, 81-82).

<sup>2</sup> "Ralph Waldo Emerson," *Atlantic*, CL (1882), 238-52. Harris admitted, however, that "while a true genetic development may be traced in such essays as that on Experience, I have not been able to discover it in the Over-Soul, nor in Spiritual Laws, nor in essays of that exalted type."

logues themselves, but at a point much nearer to Emerson, namely, the essay on Plato in *Representative men*.<sup>6</sup> Emerson's description, in this essay, of the Platonic method provides, we suggest, valuable insights into Emerson's literary procedure. In Part II of this present study we propose to examine this description, and in Parts III and IV we shall try to discover its application to the structure of specific essays and poems.

## II

Though, typically, Emerson concluded his remarks about Plato with sharp criticisms of the Greek philosopher,<sup>7</sup> the beginning of his essay made clear that he had the highest regard for Plato. Plato he saw as "a discipline in logic, arithmetic, taste, symmetry, poetry, language, rhetoric, ontology, morals or practical wisdom. . . . Plato is philosophy, and philosophy, Plato." But, continued Emerson, "a philosopher must be more than a philosopher. Plato is clothed with the powers of a poet, stands upon the highest place of the poet, and (though I doubt he wanted the decisive gift of lyric expression) mainly is not a poet because he

chose to use the poetic gift to ulterior purpose."

Confronted with such philosophical and literary pre-eminence, Emerson undertook to explain it. His explanation is that here was, at last, "a balanced soul," one which was not only perceptive of the cardinal facts of philosophy—Unity, or Identity, and Variety—but which was also capable of reconciling them. Then comes this significant statement: "A key to the method and completeness of Plato is his twice bisected line." At this point Emerson admiringly quotes from Taylor's translation of the *Republic* the passage elaborating this conception.

This passage deserves careful study, since Emerson saw it as a key to Platonism, as a key, moreover, representing the range of human knowledge and indicating its kinds. The fundamental division in the line here described—the first bisection—is between the visible world, or the objects of sensation, and the intelligible world. Objects in the realm of sense may again be distinguished as "images, that is both shadows and reflections" of things, on the one hand, and "the objects of these images, that is, plants, animals, and the works of art and nature," on the other hand. And as the visible world may be divided into the realm of physical objects and the realm of the reflections of these objects, so the intelligible world may be divided into the realm of absolute truth and the realm of its reflections in the opinions and hypotheses of men. "To these four sections," adds Emerson, "the four operations of the soul correspond—conjecture, faith, understanding, reason." The line described, then, may be represented as in the accompanying diagram (p. 81).

Such a set of concepts, Emerson believed, shaped Plato's thinking and the natural and organic expression of it.

<sup>6</sup> *The complete works of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Centenary ed.; Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1903), IV, 39-79. Hereafter this edition will be designated as *Works*.

<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, these criticisms closely resembled those customarily leveled at Emerson by his critics. Plato, he said, had no system. He lacked clarity. He was inconsistent. And he "failed to make the transition from ideas to matter." Cf., among many others of Emerson's able critics, Norman Foerster and F. O. Matthiessen. Says Foerster: "He raised no great philosophical system. 'A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds,' he said. He spoke as an oracle rather than as a schoolman" (*American poetry and prose* [Boston, 1934], pp. 503-4). Says Matthiessen: "When Emerson confined himself . . . to observing the phenomena as they were, his value can hardly be exaggerated. . . . But when he swam away into generalizations about the Ideal, he showed at once the devastating consequences of the split between the Reason and the Understanding, between the two halves of his nature, which Lowell shrewdly epitomized in the seemingly off-hand characterization of him as 'a Plotinus-Montaigne'" (*American renaissance* [New York, 1941], p. 4).

"Things are knowable," he conceived of the Greek as saying. "They are knowable," Emerson continued, "because being from one, things correspond. There is a scale; and the correspondence of heaven to earth, of matter to mind, of the part to the whole, is our guide." The mind, Emerson explains, is urged to range up this scale—"to ask for one cause of many effects; then for the cause of that; and again the cause, diving still into the profound: self-assured that it shall arrive at an absolute and sufficient one—a one that shall be all."

## INTELLIGIBLE WORLD

## VISIBLE WORLD

Truths	[Reason]
Opinions, hypotheses	[Understanding]
Objects (plants, animals, works of art and nature)	[Faith]
Images (shadows and reflections)	[Conjecture]

It is also forced to move down the scale: "Urged by an opposite necessity, the mind turns from the one to that which is not one, but other or many; from cause to effect; and affirms the necessary existence of variety, the self-existence of both, as each is involved in the other." "Action," "the power of nature," likewise "tends directly backwards to diversity. . . . Nature is the manifold."

Emerson finds Plato admirable, then, because his thought and expression operated consistently in these terms, neglecting neither the Identity at the top of the scale nor the Diversity at its base, and yet uniting both. When this "balanced soul" became a great artist, says Emerson, "the wonderful synthesis so familiar in nature; the upper and the under side of the medal of Jove; the union of impossibilities, which reappears in every object; its real and its ideal power—was now also transferred entire to the consciousness of man."

There is no need, just now, to be concerned with the soundness of Emerson's interpretation of Plato, with the justice of his praise, or even with Emerson's indebtedness to the author of the dialogues. The question is simply: What light does Emerson's statement of the Platonic method throw upon his own habits of thought and methods of writing? The answer, we suggest, is that Emerson, when he wrote upon a subject in essays or in poems, conceived of his own peculiar task in the way he ascribed to

Plato. He was bound, as he saw it, to treat any subject in such a way as to relate it both to that which was above it and to that which was below it in the scale of being represented by the twice bisected line. The possibility of success in this enterprise he conceived as depending upon the comprehending powers of man's varied faculties. In considering any topic (say art, politics, poetry, manners, or gift-giving) the movement of his discussion or of his poetic treatment resulted from his examining the subject first from one, then from another, level as its relations in one after another of the realms of being were explored.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Of Plato, Emerson wrote: "He represents the privilege of the intellect, the power, namely, of carrying up every fact to successive platforms and so disclosing in every fact a germ of expansion. These expansions are in the essence of thought. . . . The expansions are organic. The mind does not create what it perceives, any more than the eye creates the rose. In ascribing to Plato the merit of announcing them, we only say, Here was a more complete man, who could apply to nature the whole scale of the senses, the understanding and the reason" ("Plato: new readings," *Works*, IV, 81-82).



## III

It may now be profitable to study, in these terms, the method of two of Emerson's essays and two of his poems. The essays chosen—"Art" and "The poet"—will not only enlarge upon our author's literary theories but also illustrate his method.<sup>9</sup>

The essay "Art"<sup>10</sup> follows a pattern suggested in Emerson's explanation of "the power and charm" of Plato—"the sea-shore, sea seen from shore, shore seen from sea"—a systematic consideration of the points of view from which related subjects may be viewed. For paragraphs 1-3 of Emerson's essay deal with the causes of Art (the Artists); paragraphs 4-10, with the effects of Art (on the Beholders); paragraphs 11-13 with Art itself. There is also an integrated consideration, first, of Art detached from utility and later of Art with utility.

The first paragraph in section 1—on the Artists—starts with a series of eliminations. It considers, first, all acts of the soul; then only those which result in useful and fine arts; then only the fine arts, in which "not imitation but creation is the aim." Such creation is accomplished, says the author, by an omission from the work of art—of "the details, the prose of nature." The explanation of this omission is stated in terms of the aim or the end of the Artist—to "give the suggestion of a fairer creation than we know" and to give us "only the spirit and splendor." Thus, progressively, the artist, as an active

agent, is described as giving the viewer an intimation of splendor, then splendor itself—successive steps on the ladder of comprehension.

Having noticed, in the first half of the paragraph, the artist as active on that which is below him in the scale—manipulating the details of nature and influencing other men—Emerson, in the second half of the paragraph, turns to the artist as passive—receiving a knowledge of that which is above him on the scale. This knowledge is considered progressively. At first it is spoken of as if it belonged to the artist alone: "He should know that the landscape has beauty for his eye because it expresses a thought which is to him good." Then Emerson mentions knowledge of the cause on the scale above both the artist and the object depicted and therefore affecting both of them: the thought is good to the artist "because the same power which sees through his eyes is seen in that spectacle"; and therefore the artist values "the expression of nature and not nature itself" and exalts "in his copy the features that please him." The paragraph concludes with a similar consideration of the artist's relation to human, as compared with natural, subjects. In portraying a man, as in portraying a landscape, the artist must depict "the character and not the features" and he must realize, furthermore, that the appearance of his subject is merely "an imperfect picture or likeness" of that which seeks expression in both painter and subject—"the aspiring original within."

Paragraph 1, then, after its initial eliminations, has done much to show a noteworthy similarity between the artist, the scene he depicts, the human figure he portrays, and the work of art: all of these, though distinguishable, are alike in that they express that which is above them on the scale of being. Paragraph 2 moves

<sup>9</sup> For analyses, according to Harris' principles, of "Nature" and "Experience," see the article cited, pp. 247-48. Harris concludes, of the former: "Here is certainly order and arrangement that reaches below mere classification. He considers Nature in its superficial aspects first, and proceeds towards the deeper and more central phases of his subject in logical order. Each topic leads to the next one as its own proper enlargement, just as the plant grows from bud to blossom, and thence to fruit and seed, and the end is a beginning."

<sup>10</sup> *Works*, II, 351-69.



toward a unity which eliminates distinctions, showing that, lighted by the "higher illumination" which characterizes all spiritual activity, the differences between artist, human subject, and landscape, between work of art and spirit, disappear. For "what is man," asks Emerson, but nature's work of art, "nature's finest success in self-explication?" And what is man's expression and his love of both his own and nature's expression but "a still finer success"—everything irrelevant left out—"the spirit or moral . . . contracted into a musical word, or the most cunning stroke of the pencil?" With the statement of the likeness of the landscape, man, and man's art as expressions of nature, the examination of the artist, both passive and active, in his relation to the eternal forces operative in his work, is completed.

Since this is only one of the relations in which the artist may be viewed, Emerson, after exhausting his consideration of it, is constrained to "reverse Jove's coin." "But," paragraph 3 therefore begins, "the artist must employ the *symbols in use in his day and nation* to convey his enlarged sense to his fellow men. . . ." The words which we have italicized show that now, having related the artist to that which is timeless, the balanced author is preparing to relate him to his time. The sentence quoted shows the artist actively manipulating contemporary symbols; shortly, however, "the Genius of the Hour"—that above the artist on the scale—is shown becoming the active force. And, says Emerson, "as far as the spiritual character of the period overpowers the artist and finds expression in his work, so far it will retain a certain grandeur, and will represent to future beholders the Unknown, the Inevitable, the Divine." The movement of the consideration of both the time spirit and the artist

at this point is clearly in the direction of unity, since the timeless has united with the timely and the artist, willingly or unwillingly, has become the instrument of both. Hence works of art are seen to have value as history, denoting as they do, "the height of the human soul in that hour, and . . . sprung from a necessity as deep as the world." As the section on the Artists ends, therefore, the subject (whether landscape or man), the time or timeless spirit, and the artist (human, subhuman, or divine) have all been seen as uniting to collaborate in "the portrait of that fate, perfect and beautiful, according to whose ordinations all beings advance to their beatitude."

In the next seven paragraphs, as has been suggested, the Beholders of Art, heretofore only briefly mentioned, are considered. Again Emerson starts with the utmost separation and then, by a series of steps, moves toward unity. He begins by picturing us, blind to the beauty in which we are immersed, capable only of an infant-like trance. Then an artist of superior powers detaches for us "one object from the embarrassing variety," and, since "the object has its roots in central nature," it "may of course be so exhibited to us as to represent the world." This is the initiatory step of art in educating the perception of beauty. Presently another step is taken: we have our attention concentrated upon some other object, this time in nature itself, and from both works of art and natural objects "we learn at last the immensity of the world, the opulence of human nature, which can run out to infinitude in any direction." In this way we learn variety. But we also learn that all things have likenesses and that "the excellence of all things is one."

But even after describing this progress, Emerson may still say that painting and sculpture are merely initial (par. 5).

Going beyond such teachings, they eventually so open the eyes of the beholder that he sees "the eternal picture which nature paints"—yes, achieving even deeper insight, the beholder comprehends (with his highest faculty, the Reason) the Beauty and Truth which breathe through nature. This experience of the art is explained (in pars. 7-10) by "the reference of all production at last to an aboriginal Power." We perceive the beautiful only when we "carry it with us," that is, when the power which operates through the artist also operates in the beholder of his work. The work of a genius seems, then, not "a stranger" or "a foreign wonder," but "familiar, simple, a home-speaking countenance . . . as if one should meet a friend." In short, artist and beholder are unified in their experience of a power expressing itself in both. And now, gifted with such insight, the beholder finds that even the greatest pictures wrought by geniuses express "the old, eternal fact" which they have "met already in so many forms." Though this is one of the highest possible reaches of the section, Emerson again announces (par. 10) that "the arts . . . are but initial"; for, even when so experienced they are mere "tokens of the everlasting effort to produce," unnaturally separated from the practical and the moral. "There is a higher work for Art than the arts. They are abortive births of an imperfect or vitiated instinct. . . . Nothing less than the creation of man and nature is Art's end." A painter or sculptor, therefore, eventually should be impatient of anything less than this high achievement; and the beholder should be awakened by Art not only to comprehension but also to this highest sort of artistic creation:

Art should exhilarate, and throw down the walls of circumstance on every side, awakening in the beholder the same sense of universal

relation and power which the work evinced in the artist, and its highest effect is to make new artists.

In this way, Art, earlier seen as valuable for the beholder because it furnished insight he himself could not achieve, now comes to be seen as giving the beholder insights equal to those of the artist. And these insights have acquainted the beholder with the highest reaches of artistic achievement and with the need for a unification of art with action and life.

In the first section, it has been suggested, the Artist, seen at first as detached, has been seen at the end achieving unity; in the second section the Beholder moves from similar detachment to similar unity. Not surprisingly, therefore, the third section (pars. 11-13) starts with the detachment of the arts from one another and from nature and ends with their unification among themselves and with nature. Particular arts—first sculpture, then painting, then music—are seen to be below Nature and separated from it—in the lowest realm of the scale of being among shadows and reflections.<sup>11</sup> These appear imperfect "before that new activity which needs to roll through all things"—an activity which has been mentioned, in another connection, at the end of the second section—an activity, moreover, which is to be the unifying force in this section. "A true announcement of the law of creation," says Emerson, "if a man were found worthy to declare it, would carry art [from the level of mere images]<sup>12</sup> into the kingdom of nature, and destroy its sepa-

<sup>11</sup> In the diagram on p. 81, in accordance with the passage in "Plato," we have shown works of art in the realm of Objects on the scale of being. But in the sense of this passage they are to be considered imperfect copies or images of objects. In the Emersonian system this involves no inconsistency, since the system provides for both ways of viewing such works.

<sup>12</sup> Our bracketed interpretation offers an example of the value of the concept of the divided line for making Emerson's meaning more explicit than he does.

rate and contrasted existence." Art is also to be criticized, it appears in this section, when it separates itself from utility—"This division . . . the laws of nature do not permit." When art tends "to detach the beautiful from the useful," Emerson notes (par. 13), it is also detached from its creators:

The art that thus separates is itself first separated. Art must not be a superficial talent, but must begin farther back in man. Now men do not see nature to be beautiful, and they go to make a statue which shall be. They abhor men as tasteless, dull, and inconvertible, and console themselves with color-bags and blocks of marble. . . . They eat and drink, that they may afterwards execute the ideal. Thus art is vilified. . . . it stands in the imagination as somewhat contrary to nature, and struck with death from the first.

Such separation, in the transcendental system, may be remedied by uniting action and insight on a higher level. "Would it not be better," the author therefore asks, "to begin higher up, . . . to serve the ideal in eating and drinking, in drawing the breath, and in the functions of life? Beauty must come back to the useful arts, and the distinction between the fine and the useful arts be forgotten." "Proceeding from a religious heart," genius may cause Art to serve the one above even man—may "raise to a divine use the railroad, the insurance office, the joint-stock company; our law, our primary assemblies, our commerce, the galvanic battery, the electric jar, the prism, and the chemist's retort. . . ." <sup>13</sup>

Each of the three topics related to Art—the Artist, the Beholder, and Art—now having been treated in relationship to one another, to the whole range of the scale, and to the comprehension of them

by varying faculties, the essay may be said to have "united to an object the notion which belongs to it," <sup>14</sup> and may therefore properly conclude.

"The poet," <sup>15</sup> like "Art," considers diversities and identities and their relationships in a fashion in keeping with the Emersonian metaphysics and dialectic. Paragraph 1, introducing the subject, sets off four groups of men—"esteemed umpires of taste," "intellectual men," "theologians," and poets of an inferior sort—from "the highest minds" which include the masters of poetry. The four are limited and local because, in looking at elements in the scale of being (to use explicit Platonic terms, as Emerson does not), they fail to see the interrelationships of these elements with the other parts of the scale. The alleged critics, operating on the level of understanding alone, study only "rules and particulars" or make "limited judgment of color or form." They fail to see "the instant dependence of form upon soul." The intellectual men, also operating on the level of the understanding alone, detach opinions and hypotheses from matter—"do not believe in the essential dependence of the material world on thought and volition." The theologians, likewise failing to operate on the level of reason, believe that spiritual truths are detached from matter—"think it a pretty air-castle to talk of the spiritual meaning" of an object or an institution, but "prefer to come again to the solid ground of historical evidence." Even poets separate experience from art and write from the fancy instead of the imagination—the poetic exercise of reason. But "the highest minds," including the masters of poetry, "have never ceased to explore the double meaning, or shall I say the quadruple or centuple or much more manifold meaning,

<sup>13</sup> The italics here and in other quotations are ours. The semicolon distinguishes the purely commercial creations of man from those which, though commercial, are the result of intellectual investigation and scientific experimentation.

<sup>14</sup> "Plato," *Works*, IV, 62.

<sup>15</sup> *Works*, III, 3-42.

of every sensuous fact." And "this hidden truth" of the immanence of the ideal in all particulars "leads us to the consideration," Emerson says, outlining his essay, "of [1] the nature and functions of the Poet, or the man of Beauty; [2] the means and materials he uses, and [3] the general aspect of the art in the present time."

Paragraphs 2-9 develop the first of these topics: "the nature and functions of the Poet." The very words used in announcing this division suggest how, in terms of the divided line, it may be developed. The consideration of the nature of the poet will relate him to the scale of being; the examination of his functions will relate his actions to it. The pattern, therefore, is the reverse of that of the first paragraph on "Art," though the same subjects are considered. Already, in the opening paragraph of the essay, some progress has been made in considering the poet's nature; for the poet has been set off from four sorts of what are called "partial men." Now the essayist may announce that the poet, being "representative," "stands among partial men for the complete man, and apprises us not of his wealth, but of the common wealth." Other men see less than he and do not express even what they see, but—

the poet is the person in whom these powers [of seeing well and expressing] are in balance, the man without impediment, who sees and handles that which others dream of, traverses the whole scale of experience, and is representative of man, in virtue of being the largest power to receive and to impart.

Since, however, on a higher level, the nature of the poet may be indicated by contrasting him with other representative men, in paragraph 4 this contrast is introduced when Emerson talks of the "three children" of the Universe—"the Knower, the Doer and the Sayer." These three, co-ordinate as equally exalted ex-

pressions of the Universe, in their acts express, respectively, three interpretations of its ultimate unity—"the love of truth, . . . the love of good, and . . . the love of beauty." "Each is that which he is, essentially," says Emerson, "so that he cannot be surmounted or analyzed, and each of these three has the power of the others latent in him and his own patent." Paragraphs 5-7 then consider the poet as representative, announcing his aspects as "namer and sayer" and as "representer of beauty." Having such qualities, says paragraph 5, the poet is sovereign, for he is imperial in his own right, since "Beauty is the creator of the universe"; and as heroes act and sages think primarily, the poet "writes primarily what will and must be spoken."

Such isolation of the poet, however, is possible only relatively and briefly in the transcendental system. Paragraph 6 points out that coexistent in nature with the primary concerns and attributes of the poet are those of the Knower and Doer: "For nature is as truly beautiful as it is good, or as it is reasonable, and must as much appear as it must be done or known." Hence the opening lines of the paragraph identify the poet with both the Knower and the Doer, and the final lines point out that essentially the peculiar means of expression of all these representative men are the same: "Words and deeds are quite indifferent modes of the divine energy. Words are also actions, and actions are a kind of words."

Having shown how the ideal Sayer is related to the Knower and the Doer, the essayist may next define him by contrasting him with poets who fail to achieve the unity of thought, speech, and action characteristic of the ideal Sayer. Paragraph 7 tells of a man merely of talent who fails to co-ordinate thought and expression



one with whom "the argument is secondary, the finish of the verses is primary." Paragraphs 8 and 9 contrast the insight and effect of the ideal poet, one who has a "metre-making argument"—"a thought so passionate and alive that like the spirit of a plant or an animal it has an architecture of its own, and adorns nature with a new thing"—with those of a lesser poet. Paragraph 8 indicates that knowing and doing, for the true poet, are one, by telling of a poet, a neighbor of the author during his youth, in whom "genius appeared": "He had left his work and gone rambling none knew whither, and had written hundreds of lines, but could not tell whether that which was in him was there in told; he could tell nothing but that all was changed,—man, beast, earth and sea." The news of this insight, in effect, made him who heard it aware that the power of expression was eternally operative: "I had fancied that the oracles were all silent, and nature had spent her fires; and behold! all night, from every pore, these fine auroras have been streaming." Paragraph 9 shows how the poem itself thus "confided in as an inspiration" may affect the reader. What it may do is to make him a poet, giving him prospects of the freedom and insight possessed by its maker: "And now my chains are to be broken; I shall mount above these clouds and opaque airs in which I live. . . ." At this stage in the essay, though, this possibility is merely glimpsed. "Such is the hope," says Emerson, "but the fruition is postponed." Oftener, he says, the pseudo-poet does not fulfil the hope: "I tumble down again soon into my own nooks, and lead the life of exaggerations as before. . . ."

Paragraphs 10–35, the longest section of the essay, treat complexly the "means and materials" which the poet finds and uses. To trace in complete detail the

movement in this section would be beyond the scope of this present study; but a careful scrutiny of it will, we believe, show that the section is developed systematically in terms of the perception and the articulation of relationships represented by the divided line. Since each segment of this scale below the highest level is related to all the other segments, any one of them, Emerson points out, may be symbolically viewed by the perceptive poet. It is so with objects (pars. 10–14): "Things admit of being used as symbols because nature is a symbol, in the whole, and in every part." It is so with language (pars. 14–18): the poet sees

that thought is multiform; that within the form of every creature is a force impelling it to ascend into a higher form. . . . All the facts of the animal economy, sex, nutriment, gestation, birth, growth, are symbols of the passage of the world into the soul of man, to suffer there a change and reappear a new and higher fact. . . . The poet alone knows astronomy, chemistry, vegetation and animation, for he does not stop at these facts, but employs them as signs. . . . By virtue of this science the poet is the Namer or Language-maker, naming things sometimes after their appearance, sometimes after their essence. . . .

And when insight is vouchsafed the poet (pars. 19–29), it ranges through the whole scale, achieving identity at each level:

This insight, which expresses itself by what is called Imagination, is a very high sort of seeing, which does not come by study, but by the intellect being where and what it sees; by sharing the path or circuit of things through forms, and so making them translucent to others.

Thus the poet is shown as both passive and active on all levels, all levels both dictating to him their use, because of their relationships, and permitting him to use them, because of his nature.

In each of the subdivisions of the section, then, the excellences of the poet as

seer and communicator which set him off from other men are examined. So, too, however, are the corresponding perceptions and expressions of these other men. In paragraphs 12 and 13 of the first subdivision, for instance, "non-poets" are examined in their relationship to nature. "Hunters, farmers, grooms and butchers," the essayist avers, also love nature and live with her, "though they express their affection in their choice of life and not in their choice of words." They, too, are "driven" to the "use" of symbols—the cider-barrel and the palmetto to stand for political parties, stars or eagles to stand for nations. "The people," Emerson may therefore say, "fancy they hate poetry, and they are all poets and mystics!" In paragraph 15 of the second subdivision, readers are seen, at the start, dependent upon poets for their perception of the fact that "mechanical inventions" of the mind "fall within the great Order not less than the beehive or the spider's geometrical web"—objects of nature—or than "the gliding train of cars"—creations of men. But at the end of the same paragraph the essayist remarks that "a shrewd country-boy" going to the city "disposes" of the fine houses "as easily as the poet finds place for the railway." On this level, nevertheless, paragraph 16 announces, the poet has a superior power; for though "all men are intelligent of the symbols through which it [life] is named; yet they cannot originally use them." It is the poet who, "by an ulterior intellectual perception, gives them a power which makes their old use forgotten. . . ." The poet's songs, however, paragraph 18 notes, because of the poet's peculiar qualities, are infixed "irrecoverably into the hearts of men." Paragraphs 23–25 of the third subdivision show the poet's imaginative use of symbols, bringing to other men the sort of inspired liberty he himself enjoys:

"He unlocks our chains and admits us to a new scene." And the power of the poet to see that "all symbols are fluxional," remarked in paragraph 27, is paralleled, in paragraph 29, by the similar perception by all men of "changes as considerable in wheat and caterpillars." In the end, then, men other than poets are related to the poet by both similarities and differences—by love and by terror: "He is the poet and shall draw us with love and terror, who sees through the flowing vest the firm nature, and can declare it."

The remaining section of the essay (pars. 30–35), like the conclusions of other Emersonian essays on authors in general or in particular,<sup>16</sup> necessarily descends from ideal heights when it measures imperfect men with the perfect measuring stick. "I look in vain," the essayist confesses, "for the poet whom I describe." Here are America's incomparable materials, but here is, as yet, no genius to sing them. "But," he adds, "when we adhere to the ideal of the poet, we have our difficulties even with Milton and Homer." However, says Emerson (par. 31), "I must use the old largeness a little longer, to discharge my errand from the muse to the poet concerning his art." This "old largeness" allows Emerson, in the final three paragraphs, to show the poet progressing from imperfect achievements to those which are ideal. Paragraph 32 shows him "founding or putting himself in certain conditions," pursuing "a beauty, half seen, which flies before him," failing to catch more than glimpses of the ultimate, and managing, by accident, only details of what he sees. Paragraph 33 urges him to persist in his attempt "until at last rage draw out of thee that dream-power which every night shows thee is

<sup>16</sup> E.g., "The American scholar," and "Literature" in *English traits*; and "Plato," "Shakespeare," "Goethe," "Thoreau."



thine own; a power transcending all limit and privacy, and by virtue of which man is the conductor of the whole river of electricity." The final paragraph shows him, with the aid of this power, becoming the free master of all the palpable world.

Section 1 of "The poet," then, studies the ideal poet by seeing how his nature and functions are related to those of other men, both representative and partial. Section 2 relates his means and materials and the corresponding means and materials of other men to the scale of being. Section 3 contrasts the achievements of the ideal poet with those of the imperfect poet and offers a formula for ideal achievements. The three sections, each ordered after a fashion consistent with Emerson's theories of expression, thus transcendently exhaust the subject.

#### IV

Just as the essays show Emerson's literary theory corresponding to his method, so do his poems. Before looking at two of his poems, "Each and all" and "Threnody," however, it may be useful to enlarge briefly our consideration of some particular (though not exclusive) qualities of poetry as Emerson sees them. A sentence in "Plato" suggests a general contrast between poetry and philosophy: "Thought seeks to know unity in unity; poetry to show it by variety; that is, always by an object or symbol."<sup>17</sup> The point, it would seem, is one admirably supported by "The poet"—that in poetry "the ideal One can be expressed only through the Many, the objects of Nature and experience; the material affords an indirect but the sole means of conveying the eternal Unity."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Works*, IV, 56. A likeness should also be noted: both are concerned with unity.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. E. G. Sutcliffe, *Emerson's theories of literary expression* ("University of Illinois studies in language and literature," Vol. VIII [Urbana, 1923]), p. 50. This penetrating study offers a survey of the author's theories, articulating them largely in Emerson's own

While Emerson's essays, then, as has been seen, operate up and down the whole scale of being, his poems, theoretically, should be concerned with the lower levels of the scale which symbolize the relations of the higher, or with metaphorical representations of high insights. The whole range of the scale, specifically represented in Plato's dialectic, can hardly be represented in other than symbolic terms in the poems.

Such is the case with the poem "Each and all."<sup>19</sup> An idea very similar to that of this poem Emerson set forth in this passage in "Nature":

Nothing is quite beautiful alone; nothing but is beautiful in the whole. A single object is only so far beautiful as it suggests this universal grace. . . . But beauty in nature is not ultimate. It is the herald of inward and eternal beauty, and not alone a solid and satisfactory good.<sup>20</sup>

Two things, Emerson would be likely to say, make this passage more philosophic than poetic—its abstract quality and its relatively small bulk in an essay which relates many diversities to unity. By contrast, the poem is concerned with a series of pictures and actions which simply represent or symbolize abstract truth and the relationships of the scale of being.

The opening ten lines of the poem fall into four clauses, every one of which suggests—in terms of the title of the poem—the value of each for each. The "red-cloaked clown" is unconscious of his value for "thee on the hilltop looking down." The heifer unconsciously charms "thine ear" as it lows in the distance. The sexton, tolling the noonday bell, is unaware of the delight the sound brings Napoleon. Un-

terms. In his section, "Method" (pp. 107-24), Mr. Sutcliffe concludes, however, that "in poetry as in prose, Emerson found value in the mere collection of meteoric particles, since the ability to create astro-nomic systems or even constellations was denied him."

<sup>19</sup> *Works*, IX, 4-6.

<sup>20</sup> "Nature," Part III, *Works*, I, 24.

consciously, then, each brings sensuous pleasure. But another and higher kind of unconscious influence is suggested in the quatrain about the sexton; for here, the bell, meant to have other than sensuous values, momentarily halts the march of the man of action to war. In other words, the sound of the bell, intended to be a religious symbol, has an effect upon conduct because of its incidental—and detached—sensuous beauty. Lines 9–10 then tell of an unconscious contribution, by conduct—"thy life"—to a religious philosophy—"thy neighbor's creed."<sup>21</sup> It is noteworthy, too, that unconscious gifts were at the start transmitted "to thee" but the conclusion shows "thou" unconsciously giving to another. The opening lines, then, suggesting the value of each to each, are summarized in lines 11–12: "All are needed by each one;/ Nothing is fair or good alone."

This couplet, however, in addition to summarizing the first section, announces the treatment by the second section (ll. 13–36) of the value of the all to each. Here, three sentences offer instances. "I thought the sparrow's note from heaven,/ Singing at dawn on the alder bough," says the poet. But when the poet carried the songster home, the song, without the river and the sky, no longer cheered, for "he sang to my ear,—they sang to my eye." Again, the sea shells, so beautiful on the shore, when carried home—detached from the sound and the setting of the

shore—lost their beauty. It was likewise with the graceful maid whose "beauty's best attire" was "the virgin train," "the snow-white choir"; so that when the lover brought her home, her superhuman quality vanished, and she was "a gentle wife, but fairy none." Progress comparable to that in the first section is found in this one, since the section starts with natural objects representing one sort of sensuous beauty related to another sort of sensuous beauty (sound-sight, then sight-sound) and then proceeds to a human being who is enhanced not only by both sorts of sensuous beauty (sight and sound) but also by the spiritual beauty connoted by the snow-white choir of singing virgins. But in every instance, "All is needed by each one;/ Nothing is fair or good alone."

The next lines tell how the poet, after noting these instances, attempted a separation on the level not of objects but of ideas—a separation of truth from beauty. "Beauty," he said, "is childhood's cheat. I leave it behind with the games of youth. I covet truth only." But now, unconscious though he was of beauty, everything in nature symbolized the fact that beauty was inseparable from life. The ground pine itself was an ornament—"a pretty wreath"; the beauty of the violet, its fragrance, was its very breath—the essence of its life; the beauty of the surrounding trees, their pine cones and acorns, symbolized the endless perpetuation of beauty and life together; and the eternal sky soaring above was beautiful because it was full of the light which symbolized truth and the deity who united beauty and truth. Thus cognizant of unity, the poet again could recall the particulars which were related to it—"the rolling river, the morning bird," which had symbolized the relationship of the all to each. Unconsciously, therefore, beauty stole through the senses of the poet, and he

<sup>21</sup> P. A. C. [Charlotte Porter and Helen A. Clarke], in "How to study Emerson's 'Each and all,'" *Post-lore*, VI (1894), 273–74, shrewdly remarks: "There is in this series of images [in the opening lines] a development from mere sensuous perceptions to incentives of a moral nature, and all are linked together as in a chain. The lowing heifer is linked to the red-cloaked clown by their common attribute of belonging to Nature, as here both are alike in enhancing the natural beauty of the scene; the sexton is linked to the heifer by the common attribute of sound; the human life is linked to the sexton's bell by the common attribute of religion,—not expressed as in the other cases, but implied."

yielded himself to "the perfect whole"—a whole in which all parts, all beauty and all truth, were one.<sup>22</sup> Thus at the end of the poem the poet was influenced without being aware of it, as at the beginning others had been unconsciously influenced. But whereas the others were moved by objects of sense to sensuous delight or by human actions to ethical understanding, he received from things of the sensible world an insight into the ultimate unity of beauty and truth.

In Platonic terms, therefore, as Emerson would perhaps interpret them, the poem begins with the relating of the many to the many, then proceeds to the relating of the many to the one, and concludes with the one in which all objects in nature, all men's thoughts, and all men's insights are unified.

Emerson's "Threnody,"<sup>23</sup> the poet himself might have chosen to say, is another expression of the idea of the relations of the one and the many represented in "Each and all." The expression is limited in this instance to those relations which the contemplation of death serves to suggest. Since its archetype is the threnody, it may be seen as a particular example of something more general, for it moves from helpless and hopeless grief over the loss of one beloved to an assuagement of that grief through an appreciation of aspects of the situation and of elements in it not at first recognized or understood: the first six of its eight stanzas elaborate the occasion, grounds, and mood of a father's grief over the loss of his young son, and the two final stanzas represent his recovery of insight or faith and the corresponding lifting of his despair. The poem reflects Emerson's particular and peculiar poetic theory and philosophy, however,

in the major terms which the poet employs to express his sorrow and to trace the steps of its relief and, more particularly, in the changes of relationship which, as he shifts between the past and the present, he discovers these terms to undergo. For it is the father's failure to perceive what Emerson elsewhere calls "the manifold correspondencies of things" which underlies his hopeless sense of separation not only from his son but from Nature and Man as well, and it is by the renewal of his perception of the relation of all these to the Eternal One that he is at last lifted from doubt and despair.

The poem opens with the poet's lament over the inability of Nature to restore the child he has lost, contrasting the present powerlessness of Nature in this respect with evidences of its power in other respects (ll. 1-8). This contrast is pursued in the second stanza, with the addition of the reflection, based upon a recollection of the child's relation to Nature in the past, that the child who has been lost adorned and outvalued Nature, which survives him.

The third stanza continues this reference to the past but shifts the basis of judgment from the child's former relation with Nature to the boy's former relations with men. The poet recalls the right he had to watch the boy's movements and the pleasure he took in hearing the boy's voice (ll. 32-39). At this level of relation, where the sensuous powers of sight and hearing are bereft, the recollection of the child's human associations is enlarged to include others besides the poet, "fairest dames and bearded men," who heard him with joy (ll. 40-53) and who looked upon "his early hope, his liberal mien," and even "took counsel from his guiding eyes" (ll. 54-57). These recollections are climaxed by the memory of daily experience in which the poet had been united with

<sup>22</sup> Cf. a similar interpretation of these lines by P. A. C., pp. 275-76.

<sup>23</sup> *Works*, IX, 148-58.

his fellow-villagers, though still at the level of the senses, in relation to the boy—the viewing of “the school-march,” which caused the poet’s bosom to glow and which “each village senior paused to scan” (ll. 58–73).

In Stanza IV the time reference returns to the present, which by contrast with the past no longer provides to men’s sight the object in which they had delighted. “Now Love and Pride, alas! in vain,/Up and down their glances strain” (ll. 80–81). The statement of men’s sense of loss is thereupon enlarged by the introduction of those inanimate and natural things with which the child through his activities had been closely connected (his sled, sticks he had gathered, “the ominous hole he dug in the sand,” “his daily haunts”) and which, now that the “boy is gone,” remain only as reminders of his disappearance. Thus the separation of the child from Nature, recorded in the opening stanzas of the poem, is connected with his separation from his father and from other men, recorded in the preceding stanza. Man and Nature are alike bereft.

In the next stanza the poet’s thought turns back to “that shaded day” of death on which these tragic separations occurred. He recalls that “night came, and Nature had not thee” (l. 102). At this point the poet and Nature were “mates in misery” (l. 103).

But the lines which follow discover a further step of separation, for they trace the poet’s loss of sympathy with Nature and his defection from her (ll. 104–25). With the coming of morning “each snow-bird chirped, each fowl must crow,” and the poet was oppressed by the sense that, in “ostrich-like forgetfulness,” “weed and rock-moss is preferred” to the boy, who had formerly outvalued all else in Nature and had been “. . . the blossom of the earth, /Which all her harvest were

not worth” (ll. 124–25). Nor is this judgment of Nature merely a father’s private and personal sense of the matter. “A general hope was quenched,” and “all must doubt and grope” (ll. 126–33). The conclusion seems, then, to be justified that it was not the child but Nature which had “ailed” and that “The world and not the infant failed” (ll. 138–39). In this loss of sympathy with Nature, the poet had been joined by other men. But even this unity was disrupted, for the poet came to be separated from other men and they from each other through the confusion of impulses generated by the child’s death:

Some went and came about the dead;  
And some in books of solace read;  
Some to their friends the tidings say;  
Some went to write, some went to pray;  
One tarried here, there hurried one;  
But their heart abode with none [ll. 152–57].

The stanza ends with a final tragic partition, that of the poet himself. “The eager fate” which had taken the child “took the largest part of me” (l. 161), and this division and loss, this piecemeal resigning of the world, “is true dying.” The brief stanza which follows marks the lowest point of the poet’s unhappiness. He and other men have been “too much bereft,” too tragically divided. And he falls into bitter accusation against “truth and Nature’s costly lie!” (l. 172).

Up to this point the thoughts and feeling of the poet have been developed around the relationship of four central terms: the child, Nature, the poet, and other men. In the two opening stanzas the poet’s grief had been stated by reference to the separation of the child from Nature, a separation which is first presented through the consideration of Nature’s inability to restore the dead and then rendered tragic through the recollection of the child’s superior value by comparison with Nature. The third and fourth



stanzas mark the separation of the boy from other men; first, his removal from his father's sight and hearing, then from the hearing and sight of the villagers, and, finally, from both. In the fourth stanza this rupture of human relationships is viewed as involving those natural objects with which the boy had been associated and from which he is now disassociated. Stanza V pursues the disruption of relationships by recording the poet's defection and that of other men from Nature, then suggesting the failure of concurrence among other men, and, finally, declaring even the division and disunion of the poet himself. The process of separation is thus complete: the child has been lost to Nature, to the poet, and to other men; the sympathy between the poet and Nature has been destroyed; other men, who had been united with the poet in his judgment of Nature, have diverged from one another; and even the poet is divided and has lost part of himself in resigning part of his world.

This dissection of despair reflects the transcendental philosophy of Emerson only by contrast. Its account of the disruption of the relationships which that philosophy asserts and, above all, its omission of the Eternal One by reference to which these relationships are properly constituted<sup>24</sup> make it the expression of a false philosophy and demand a discovery of the true conception of man and Nature. The recovery of faith in the last two stanzas of the poem is initiated by the in-

troduction of a new term "the deep Heart," a part of the poet, hitherto neglected, by which he is related to ultimate Being.<sup>25</sup> The deep Heart calls up an aspect of the past which the poet had not examined earlier, namely, the lessons which, while watching the child, the poet had "within his eyes beheld" (l. 184). What he had failed to remember are, to put it flatly, two fundamental principles of Emersonian Transcendentalism. The first of these has to do with the scale of being. The poet recalls that in the child he had perceived "Heaven's numerous hierarchy span/The mystic gulf from God to man" (ll. 185-86). In the recollection of this lesson he discovers that the disjunctions about which he had been tragically troubled ought not to distress him, since they cannot be real: "'Tis not within the force of fate/The fate-conjoined to separate" (ll. 193-94). He recalls, in the second place, that he had been taught "... each private sign to raise/Lit by the super-solar blaze" (ll. 201-2).<sup>26</sup> He had been taught, that is say, the symbolic possibilities of each particular of the scale of being

<sup>24</sup> The change of thought and mood, which begins at this point in the poem, has been foreshadowed in several ways. For one thing, the successive separations and divorcements in the first part of the poem require a countermovement toward unity. Moreover, the principle of the "circling" streams of being, upon which the resolution of the poet's unhappy division fundamentally depends, is implicit in the references to the succession of the seasons at the beginning of the poem. In addition, the references to "the deep-eyed boy" in the first part of the poem prepare for the function of "the deep Heart" in the last part of the poem by anticipating such a relationship between the child and the fundamental nature of things as will give the poet, when he comes to sense it, the basis for rediscovering his proper relationship to all things.

<sup>25</sup> Malloy, commenting upon these lines in his paper on "Merlin," says: "Of course, the supersolar blaze, that is, a blaze above the light of the sun, would be an intellectual or a spiritual blaze,—such a light and illumination as should show in the 'private sign' its true significance under a law by which its evil was only good in disguise. The 'private sign' was the death of a beautiful boy. The body was 'magic made to last a season.' But it was not 'excellent' in the highest sense. The supersolar blaze raised the sign to the real 'excellent' of which it was a symbol."

<sup>26</sup> Compare Emerson's own analysis of "The sphinx": "Mr. Emerson wrote in his note-book in 1859: 'I have been asked the meaning of the "Sphinx." It is this: The perception of identity unites all things and explains one by another, and the most rare and strange is equally facile as the most common. But if the mind live only in particulars, and see only differences (wanting the power to see the whole—all in each), then the world addresses to this mind a question it cannot answer, and each new fact tears it in pieces and it is vanquished by the distracting variety'" (E. W. Emerson, "Notes," *Works*, IX, 412).



in its relation to the Eternal One. In the perception of these relations the most grievous personal experience is lifted "past the blasphemy of grief" (l. 204). The stanza concludes with an application of these truths concerning the hierarchy of symbols in the scale of being to the separation from Nature, which the past had earlier experienced, for "the deep Heart" declares: "Throb thine with Nature's throbbing breast,/And all is clear from east to west" (ll. 207-8).

The final stanza of the poem begins by reaching back once more into the past to recover another forgotten or neglected aspect of the poet's relation to his son. The poet now recalls not merely the lessons which were to be read in the child's eyes but also the child's essential innocence, loveliness, and prophetic character—in short, his qualities of goodness, beauty, and truth. The recollection that the boy incarnated such qualities of the Infinite makes absurd the supposition that he should remain fixed and unchanging, for the Eternal Spirit, forever generating expressions of Itself in the temporal world, must forever find each particular expression inadequate for containing its full sense. It is consequently impossible that its "glowing revolution pause" (l. 227):

When the scanty shores are full  
With Thought's perilous, whirling pool;  
When frail Nature can no more,  
And then the Spirit strikes the hour:  
My servant Death, with solving rite,  
Pours finite into infinite [ll. 232-37].<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> In "The American scholar," Emerson phrases this idea thus: "What is nature to him [the scholar]? There is never a beginning, never an end, to the inexplicable continuity of this web of God, but always circular power returning into itself" (*Works*, I, 85). In a note on this passage E. W. Emerson refers to another expression of the idea in "Uriel" (*Works*, IX, 14):

"Line in nature is not found;  
Unit and universe are round;  
In vain produced, all rays return. . . ."

In the preceding stanza the poet had discovered the value of the many as a symbol of the Infinite Being; in this he discovers the inadequacy of the many as an expression of that Being and consequently their impermanence. The perception of the necessity of the impermanence of "figure, bone, and lineament," because of the relation of this impermanence to Spirit, induces the corresponding perception of the permanence of the ideal. Nature and the "lengthening scroll of human fates," when rightly understood, make manifest that ". . . what is excellent,/As God lives, is permanent" (ll. 266-67). To the instructions, then, with which the preceding stanza was concluded, that the poet's heart should throb in sympathy with Nature, can now be added the admonition: "Revere the Maker; fetch thine eye/Up to his style, and manners of the sky" (ll. 270-71). Thus the poet has rediscovered his proper relation, first with Nature and then with the Eternal Spirit of things, which together mark the extremes of the hierarchy of being, a hierarchy in which each lower element serves to symbolize the One but is so strained in the task that it must lose its individuality and be poured back into the Infinite. These insights lead to the further and immediately relevant discovery that heaven cannot be built of matter however permanent ("not of adamant and gold/Built be heaven stark and cold"), but must be constituted of transient and even ephemeral expressions of the divine energy: ". . . a nest of bending reeds,/Flowering grass, and scented weeds" (ll. 274-75). The changing order must, in short, be understood as the consequences of the creative energy of its "swift Lord," who

Through ruined system still restored,  
Broad-sowing, bleak and void to bless,  
Plants with worlds the wilderness [ll. 282-85].<sup>28</sup>

On the basis of such a conception, the loss mourned in the opening stanza of the poem and elaborated to the point of despair concerning truth and Nature through Stanza VI is now seen to be no real loss. The child who seemed lost to Nature, lost to his father, and lost to other men is discovered, when the poet re-establishes his proper relation to Nature and Eternal Being which Nature symbolizes, to be really, "lost in God, in Godhead found."

This analysis has dealt with only a few

of the many strands in a complex poem. But it may serve to indicate that "Threnody," like "Art," "The poet," and "Each and all," is at once a statement of Emerson's philosophy or metaphysics and an exemplification of his literary theory. And this is as it should be, since for Emerson the true poet and the true philosopher must be one, and the highest philosophy is poetic, the noblest poetry philosophic.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> E. W. Emerson's note on these lines: "The idea of Deity rushing into distribution is treated at length in the first part of the *Tismachus* of Plato" (*Works*, IX, 454).

<sup>29</sup> "The poet who shall use Nature as his hieroglyphic must have an adequate message to convey thereby. Therefore when we speak of the Poet in any high sense, we are driven to such examples as Zoroaster and Plato, St. John and Menu, with their moral burdens" (*Works*, VIII, 65).

## THE PLOTTING OF *OUR MUTUAL FRIEND*

ERNEST BOLL

THE manuscript of *Our mutual friend*<sup>1</sup> consists of leaves of bluish-tinted letter-paper, seven by nine inches, pasted on a paper backing to fill two leather-bound volumes. The final notes from which the novel was developed were written on the same kind of paper but were pasted with the greater dimension breadth-wise and have been bound into the first volume in a continuous sequence to form a prefatory survey.<sup>2</sup>

The leaves on which the notes were written were folded in half across the narrower dimension exactly like letter-paper. On what would be the outside back of each leaf of this folded letter-paper Dickens made his first notes for the whole number; then on the outside front he outlined that number by chapter divisions. There are nineteen of these folded leaves, one for each number. They are so spread out on their backing that the outside back of the leaf is at the reader's left and the outside front at his right. The first general notes for the last number were so copious that they ran over to the inside back of the leaf, and that page becomes visible when the leaf is turned because the backing that would have hidden the written section was cut out.

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to the trustees of the Drexel Institute of Technology, who gave me permission to make this study, and also to the controller, Dr. W. Ralph Wagneller, and to the secretary, Mr. C. T. Bach, who arranged for my continued examination of the manuscript. In October, 1944, the manuscript became the property of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, of Philadelphia.

<sup>2</sup> See F. G. Kitton, *The novels of Charles Dickens* (London, 1897), for an account of the earliest jottings for *Our mutual friend* in the notebook of Dickens, and for excerpts from letters relating to the inception of various themes; see also Mrs. J. Comyns Carr, *Reminiscences* (London, 1926), for a transcript of the notebook, which contains notes for novels from *Little Dorrit* to *Our mutual friend*.

The interest of any student of Dickens, or even of the general reader, in these first coherent formulations of the pattern of the novel can be assumed. They give partial answers to such everlasting questions as: What were the headline images that sprang up before Dickens's mind when inspiration began to work in him? What gropings did his imagination evolve in its reach after interest and plausibility? How consciously did Dickens work at his craft, that is, how responsible an artist was he? To what detail did he keep his hand upon the design he wove month after month? And what were his own feelings toward various elements of the design as they developed under his hand? The answers to these questions are given in a number of ways.

The headline images are jotted notes of places demanding they be used as back-grounds for dramatic actions, of figures that could be elaborated to accumulate suspense, of gestures having a deeply penetrative power, of words spoken aloud or in the mind to mark the mood of a scene or the nerve of a motive, of tag phrases condensing the traits of personalities, of bits of sense-description that would light up a whole setting.

So Leaf I (b) calls for the opening of the novel to be "between the bridges," that is, between Southwark Bridge and London Bridge; and Leaf XVI (b) gives the direction, "Open at Plashwater Weir Mill Lock, and prepare for the attack upon Eugene." A note on the front of Leaf I sketches "the man in his boat, watching the tide," and one on the back reads, "It in tow." A boxed note on Leaf X (f) catches the gist of a scene in describing

Bradley Headstone during his interview with Lizzie Hexam in St. Peter's churchyard in Cornhill: "His hand upon the coping. Wrenching at it while he speaks." On Leaf V (f) Lizzie's call into the unanswering darkness strikes the tragic tone of Hexam's death: "Father, was that you calling me?" The mood of Betty Higden's death also is marked by a spoken phrase, on Leaf XIII (f): "Now lift me, my dear"; as is that of Johnny's death, on Leaf VIII (f) by the remark, "a kiss for the boofer lady." Riderhood is shown in a note on Leaf XVI (f) beginning to suspect the behavior of Bradley Headstone: "Why dressed like me?"

Then there are the tag phrases that label personalities. The Veneerings are first identified, on Leaf I (b), by the question "Who is their oldest friend?" and then (f) by the note: "The entirely new people. Everything new. Grandfather new, if they had one."

A bit of vivid sense-description that was to introduce the dramatic scene of Riderhood's resuscitation in the Six Jolly Fellowship-Porters' pub is found on Leaf XI (f): "The litter bumping at the door." A happy metaphor out of railway practice is jotted on Leaf XIII (f): "Stations shutting their green eyes and opening their red ones as they let the Boofer lady go by."

Of especial interest are the traces of Dickens experimenting until he found the exactly satisfying names of his people. Leaf I (f) reveals that the trial name for Hexam was Hexham, and that Hexam's daughter was named Jenny before the name Lizzie was given her. The name Jenny, however, held on strongly to Dickens's mind as the name for Miss Hexam; the manuscript contains a number of slips in which the name Jenny was written first, before it became natural for Dickens to write the name as Lizzie the

first time. The same leaf shows Lightwood's name to have been Alfred before Mortimer produced the satisfying ring. On Leaf II (f) we notice that Wegg was first S. Wegg, then Solomon, and finally Silas. Mr. Boffin was called Teddy before he became Nicodemus, and so, by contraction, Noddy. Leaf VI (b) shows that Miss Peecher was at first named Pitcher; and it also (f) displays the juggling of syllables that produced the schoolmaster's name: Amos Headstone, Amos Deadstone, Bradley Deadstone, Bradley Headstone.

Proofs of Dickens's close control over the weaving of the story, of his feeling of responsibility over every movement of his imaginary shuttle, face the reader at many points along the plan of the whole novel. We can hear him as the writer talking over the progress of the story with his critical and directing other-self, that merely watched while *he* felt and wrote; but sometimes the writer listens while the directing self dictates curt orders. It was a happy combination, a happy division of tasks, which, performed by a thoroughly united self, might have been impossible of accomplishment. How often the directing self orders the writer to: "Lay the ground carefully" or "Work out the story towards . . ." or "Lead up gradually . . ." or "Work the . . ." or "Work in . . ." or "Relieve by making . . ." or "Work round to . . ." or "Work out the . . ." or "Make the most of . . .," "Work up and on . . .," or "Lead up to . . .," and the like. And then there are the questions the hesitating writer asks of his almost always unhesitating critic. On Leaf II (b): "On the Dust-ground? Certainly." On Leaf II again (f): "Silas? Yes." On Leaf IV (b): "Take up Wrayburn—and Lightwood? Yes. And bring out Eugene." Once the critic changed his mind, from a "No" to a

"Yes," on Leaf VII (b). The transcript of notes would have been an even more enlightening revelation of Dickens's care over the progress of his work if it could have included the little check marks with which Dickens assured himself that characters listed for an appearance in a number, or ideas determined upon, had been given their speaking and acting parts or had been fully realized in the manuscript.

Other symbols carried over in the transcript measure the intensity of the author's feelings toward specific ideas and also the emphasis he wanted to give them. One sign of the degree of his enthusiasm was the extent of his underlining a note. After having gone through a series of trials on Leaf I (f): "The Gaffer. Gaffer. Gaffer Hexham," Dickens found the center of his target and celebrated his satisfaction by underlining Hexham with three triumphal strokes. On Leaf V (b) he asks, "The orphan?" and replies with an enthusiastic three-lined emphasis under "Yes." He must have been anxious over an epithet suitable for Fledgeby, since, on Leaf VII (b), his discovery of Fascination was celebrated with a maximum underscoring of four strokes. On Leaf XVII (b) joy is expressed with two lines under "the baby coming," and Leaf XIX (f) twice shows the three-lined underscoring under "Baby." Underscoring also proceeded from a sense of the importance of an idea for winning interest. So, the Veneerings are emphasized on Leaf I (b) to the extent of three strokes under their name and on (f) by as many strokes under the designation "The entirely new people." In the notes on the same chapter three lines emphasize the importance of the "Dinner Party" that is to introduce a large number of the cast and also the story of the prosperous Dust Contractor. On the same leaf Bella Wilfer's name is given three stripes

of importance. Three strokes on Leaf IV (b and f) signalize the emphasis on the directions "And bring out Eugene" and "Bring on Eugene." The word "Imply" in the sentence "Imply some change," on Leaf IV (f), is underscored as an obvious record of the importance of care in technique. The boxing inside which other notes were framed is a further device Dickens used to direct especial emphasis of his imagination upon a critically weighed idea, as on Leaf XIX (b), where he boxed in the phrase, "The Inexhaustible Baby."

One of the particular values of emphasis apportioned by outright words in these notes has been correctly associated with Dickens, although it has been made the object of a perhaps defensive derision by critics who were insensitive to ethical codes. On Leaf III (f) we read the characterizing sentence: "Mr and Mrs Boffin always the poor children's friends." Leaf IV (f) directs Dickens to "kill Gaffer retributively." On Leaf XIX (b) the phrase "Bella always faithful" is twice underscored to praise her unquestioning loyalty to young Harmon; and on the same leaf there is the note on the Boffins: "clearing him and Mrs Boffin, and shewing them to be the best of honest creatures." Silas Wegg is judged, too, in the direction on Leaf XIX (f): "Pitch Wegg into a mud cart." Dickens's code of ethics was a consciously and constantly, not a spasmodically, practiced one.

The notes repeatedly show the care with which Dickens stopped at times to look over his characters, to make certain that he was neglecting none. See, for examples, how Leaf VI (b) lists in review the characters to be brought out in the prospective number; how Leaf XI (b) reviews the warp of the story at the middle point; and how Leaf XIX (b) recalls every re-

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maining character and plot line, and binds each firmly to the fabric to bring the novel to a tightly knotted close.

The reader may be wondering how far ahead Dickens planned his novel, both as a whole and as to individual numbers. The first question I cannot answer. The titles of the four parts of the novel, jotted down on Leaf I (b), may be a recapitulation of the titles after they had been found for each part. But a comparison of the tints of ink used in the notes and in the manuscript yields a number of clues that may be studied on the basis of concomitant variations. The possibility had to be considered that notes and manuscript might have been worked on in different rooms or places with different inks; also, that even if the same kind of ink was used in two or more different writing places, the supply in one place might run out and a different type of ink be substituted for it. Differences in the tints of ink used would not necessarily imply different writing times. But reasonably parallel variations in similar tints of inks would certainly tend to imply approximately the same writing periods. The case for the study of the two documents is simplified by the general care Dickens took to have as close a uniformity of inks as of writing paper.

The closest reasonably concomitant changes occur in No. XIV. The notes outlining chapter xiv in that number are written with the same shade of watery pale ink as is the corresponding chapter in the manuscript, whose heading alone is written in the dark, full-bodied ink in which the previous chapters and the notes for them are written. The notes for chapter xv, which opens No. XV, return to the dark, thick ink in which the chapter in the manuscript is written. These are the clearest parallels in changes in ink in the entire manuscript, and they suggest that

there was at least one point in the writing of the novel at which the notes concerning a chapter were written directly before the text of that chapter. That point is past the two-thirds mark in the novel, and the time-relationship may be taken, therefore, as not far from the normal one in that novel, between the sketching of a chapter and its writing.

Slighter parallel variations in the tint of the ink suggest that the notes for the second number were being written during the middle of the writing of the text for the first number. A slightly darker ink was used in the manuscript of No. IV than in the manuscript of No. III; and the same color change can be detected in the notes of No. V when compared with the notes of No. IV. A change from black ink to blue and a like clogging of the pen produce a double similarity between the notes for the eleventh number and the latter part of the manuscript text of the tenth number from chapter xv on. It is obvious that the notes for the last number must have been written very shortly before the writing of the text. The notes contain two shades of blue ink, although the shades do not appear to be used in any clear succession. The manuscript of the number begins in a dark tint of blue, but that tint gives way to a lighter blue; these tints match those in the preliminary jottings.

That two kinds of inks were, however, used at one time in the writing of the novel may be observed in the text of one manuscript chapter, chapter xi in No. IX. Some of the text is written in blue ink, and some in black; the chapter ends in a passage of solid blue, which is carried over to the next chapter. In this chapter (xi) some of the text written in blue ink is corrected in black; while other parts of the black-ink text are corrected in the same

shade of black. No black ink is used in any of the notes for No. IX, nor is it found in the notes of either the preceding or the following number. The use of two kinds of ink in the same chapter was apparently unique in this novel. I think the maximum interval in this book between the planning of any number and its writing can be put at half a number. We know of at least two instances in which the planning occurred immediately before the writing of either that number or of a chapter in that number. Only the most obvious variations in tint have been used to demonstrate the interval between notes and text, and these occur at well-distributed points in the course of the manuscript.

One obscurity that might puzzle a reader of the notes is found in the sentence on Leaf XVII (f) which cites the words of Charley Hexam in his quarrel with Headstone: "Charley not wanted any more." The actual scene as it was developed explains the obvious point of the elliptic sentence: Charley tells Headstone that the teacher is not wanted any more.

A corrected slip might also be interpreted as a change in the plan of a minor plot line. Leaf XIX (b) bears this change: Silas Wegg's name is crossed out and that of Mr. Venus replaces it to couple the taxidermist in a marriage with Pleasant Riderhood. The first writing of the name of Wegg should be regarded as a momentary confusion. Mr. Venus had been matched with Miss Riderhood as far back as the second number, and she is named as his beloved in the twelfth number. Kate Field made the erroneous deduction of a change in the plans for Miss Riderhood's mate after a study of the manuscript notes and recorded her error in an article appearing in *Scribner's magazine* for August, 1874.

A number of notes concerning Eugene

Wrayburn at the critical stage of his final disposition have led me to wonder if Dickens may not have been in doubt over whether Wrayburn was to live or to die after Headstone's attack. The clues implying a recovery are these: on Leaf XVII (b): "Lizzie saves him," and (f): "Rescue by Lizzie"; and on Leaf XVIII (b): "Eugene married to Lizzie, on his sick bed." But the last note is followed immediately by the phrase, "Eugene dying," and by the note, "I hope I should amend, if I recovered," says Eugene, "but I am afraid I shouldn't." On the same leaf (f) is this apparent key-phrase, spoken by Eugene: "I think upon the whole that I had better die, my dear." These notes cause me to suspect an impulse to let Eugene die. The text gives support to that interpretation. Chapter x, of Book IV, is written as if to prepare for another of the moving deathbed scenes, up to a point just before the end, when Mortimer raises the hope that Eugene's marriage to Lizzie may help Eugene to recover.

If we broaden our view of Dickens's imagination by stepping outside the covers of *Our mutual friend* to include a view of the novel preceding it, *Great expectations*, and the fragment of a novel that followed it, *Edwin Drood*, we realize that Dickens was deep in the shadows of his final tragic-ironic mood and that he was occupied with the theme of death and courtship. In *Great expectations* the favored rival of Pip for Estella, Bentley Drummle, is killed by a horse, leaving Pip ironically free to marry the girl he no longer loves. In *Edwin Drood* John Jasper ironically commits a needless murder when he kills (there is no doubt in my mind as to the murder) the man he thinks is the favored rival, Edwin. Halfway between stands *Our mutual friend*. A gentleman and a

humble man are the rivals. The favored one is the gentleman. Creative pressure seems to me to have directed its goal toward the death of the favored suitor and toward two ironic effects: the first, that both rivals for the affection of a woman of the lower classes should die as the result of a conflict over which should be both suitor and tutor; the second, that the professional teacher should turn out to be the successful murderer of the amateur. Such an ending was prepared for and would have been psychologically rationalized by Wrayburn's pessimism over his power of

reforming. At the least we can say that Eugene was beaten so severely that he might plausibly have died of his injuries and that Dickens appears not to have been fully decided as he planned the chapters whether that favored gentleman suitor was to die or to live.

These few remarks are intended to point out only some of the many significances to be found in the following pages. The curious reader has been left a full measure of discoveries to come upon for himself.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

[LEAF I, BACK]

open between the bridges

It in ~~low~~-tow

The Veneerings. (who is their oldest friend?)

at their dinner-party. lay the ground carefully. Wrong servant

Late Mr ~~Harmon~~ Harmon

Lead up for old servant. Next N?

"Man's Drowned."

Work in two witnesses by name: For end of story:

Ship's steward. Potterson

Job Potterson

Passenger Mr Jacob Kibble

Work in the girl who was to have been married and made rich.

4 Books.

I —The Cup and the Lip

II —Birds of a Feather

III—a Long Lane

IV—a Turning

[LEAF I, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—N? I)

CHAPTER I

ON THE LOOK-OUT

The man in his boat, watching the tide. The Gaffer. Gaffer. Gaffer Hexham. Hexam.

His daughter rowing. Jenny. Lizzie.

Taking the body in ~~low~~-tow

~~The rej-~~ His rejected partner, who has "Robbed a live man!" Riderhood this fellow's name.

CHAPTER II

THE MAN FROM SOMEWHERE

The entirely new people.

Everything new. Grandfather new, if they had one.

Dinner Party. Twemlow. Podsnap.

Lady Tippins.

Alfred Lightwood? Mortimer. also Eugene.

Languid story of Harmon the Dust Contractor

CHAPTER III

ANOTHER MAN

Hexam's son charley. Hexam's house, and the bills on the wall. old mill.

Police Station. Body "Not much worse than Lady Tippins." also "Eugene"

Mr Julius Hand-Handford So Harmon Murder comes to be forgotten

## CHAPTER IV

### THE R. WILFER FAMILY

Rumty. Majestic and monotonous female for his wife.

Two daughters. Bella Wilfer

Lavinia

cherubic husband, & allegorical wife

Mr John Rokesmith

[LEAF II, BACK]

Lady Toppins? at the marriage of mature young lady & do gentleman

Twemlow? D°

Veneerings? D°

Progress of that artful match?

between mature young gentleman  
and mature young lady

] Yes—  
to their  
contract

on the Dust-ground? Certainly

Harmony Jail

or Boffin's Bower

cut adrift

cast out

Turned out

Under Suspicion

Parting company

[An arrow leads from the following note to the plan for chapter vii on the front of the leaf.]  
This chapter [the original chap. vii] (too long for the N°) transferred to N° 3. In its stead

## CHAPTER VII

### IN WHICH MR WEGG LOOKS AFTER HIMSELF

Picture of the queer St Giles's business  
with Imaginary man

[LEAF II, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—N° II)

## CHAPTER V

### BOFFIN'S BOWER

8. Wegg at his stall.

Solomon? Silas? Yes. "our House"

Seems to have taken his wooden leg naturally

So, Mr Boffin. Teddy Boffin? Nicodemus. "Noddy Boffin"

Lead up to Boffin's Bower

and to "declining and falling off the Rooshan Empire."

Mrs Boffin a High-Flyer at Fashion. In a hat and feathers. This to go through the Work.



## CHAPTER VI

### CUT ADRIFT

The Six Jolly Fellowship Porters. Description

Bow

Miss Potterson

Miss Abbey

She, the Sister of the ship's steward.

The Man from the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter. Riderhood.

Boy departs to seek his fortune. "Unnat'ral young beggur!"

## CHAPTER VII

### A MARRIAGE CONTRACT

Veneerings again.

Mr and Mrs Lammle

Having taken one another in, will now take in every one else.

[The chapter outlined on II (b) replaced this chapter, which became chap. x.]

### [LEAF III, BACK]

Work out the story towards:

Mr and Mrs Boffin's showing their disinterestedness

Taking Bella Wilfer to live with them and Rokesmith's becoming Secretary

Get all the affairs square, and the Boffins square

clear the ground, behind and before.

Glimpse of Wrayburn.

### [LEAF III, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—N<sup>o</sup> III)

## CHAPTER VIII

### MR BOFFIN IN CONSULTATION

at Mortimer Lightwood's chambers. History young Blight

The Bees

Mr and Mrs Boffin always the poor children's friends. quite defying the rich old man.

Lead up gradually to their taking "Our House."

Rokesmith and Boffin come together.

## CHAPTER IX

### MR AND MRS BOFFIN IN CONSULTATION

Their plans.

Fashion

and orphan to be adopted:

and Bella

Sketch of Curate

and wife

At the Wilfer's

Rokesmith and Mrs. Boffin come together.

## CHAPTER X

### A MARRIAGE CONTRACT

This chapter transferred bodily from No. 2

[LEAF IV, BACK]

Take up Wrayburn  
—and Lightwood?

Yes. And bring out Eugene

Riderhood? Yes.

Podsnappery? Yes

Mem: The N<sup>o</sup> ~~overwritten and~~ overwritten and chapter divided into two, and carried on into N<sup>o</sup> V

[LEAF IV, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—N<sup>o</sup> IV)

## CHAPTER XI

### PODSNAPPERY

The whole Institution of Podsnappery, as embodied in its representation Man

Not English

all disagreeables put behind him.

The blush on the cheek of the young person

Miss Podsnap
-----------------

A set of quadrilles Podsnap plate

Mr and Mrs Lammle. Lay the ground

## CHAPTER XII

### THE SWEAT OF AN HONEST MAN'S BROW

Cold spring evening. Wrayburn and Lightwood.

Twilight

To them, Mr. Riderhood. To earn the reward "by the sweat of his brow."

Mr Riderhood's testimony and its corroborative Proofs

all on alfred David

## CHAPTER XIII

### TRACKING THE BIRD OF PREY—~~BROUGHT DOWN~~

Watching all night.

On the river in the early morning

Kill Gaffer retributively. "Many a slip" for Mr Riderhood.

Bring on Eugene. Imply some change between him and Lizzie Hexam. Don't shew them together.

[LEAF V, BACK]

Settle Bella with the Boffins. Her father? Yes  
 also Rokesmith Yes  
 and establish Wegg at the Bower.  
 on a false scent. Yes.  
 The orphan? Yes

Jennie

The Hexams. Lizzie?	<u>No</u>	Hold over for
and the boy?	<u>No</u>	the new "book"

Wind up the book I as skilfully and completely as I can.

Mem: for the N?

6 pages of the N? brought forward. 20 to write

[LEAF V, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—N? V)

CHAPTER XIV

THE BIRD OF PREY BROUGHT DOWN

River description (touched for the new purpose) from overwritten last N?

Death of Gaffer

"Father, was that you calling me?"
---------------------------------------

Indication of what has become of Eugene

CHAPTER XV

TWO NEW SERVANTS

Mr and Mrs Boffin

To them Rokesmith. Engaged.

Over the house, all.

Mrs Boffin and the faces.—

Her memory awakened without her knowing how.—By Rokesmith's face.

CHAPTER XVI

MINDERS AND REMINDERS

Work on Detach the Secretary from Lightwood

To Brentford. Mrs Betty Higden. Sloppy.

End with Bella.

CHAPTER XVII

A DISMAL SWAMP

all that besets the fortunate Man

Charities

Begging letters

Projectors Indicate Wegg, poking about

THE END OF THE FIRST BOOK

[LEAF VI, BACK]

3 chapters

Lizzie Hexam. Yes

and her brother? Yes

and Eugene? Yes

Mr Venus? No

any new character? Yes. Schoolmaster

and Mistress

Miss Pitcher

and her pupil Mary Anne

Podsnappery? only incidentally

Mr and Mrs Alfred Lammle. No

Miss Peecher. Not Pitcher

[LEAF VI, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—Nº VI)

BOOK THE SECOND. BIRDS OF A FEATHER

CHAPTER I

OF AN EDUCATIONAL CHARACTER

A ragged School

Smith Square

a better sort of school

The Schoolmaster

Amos Headstone

Amos Deadstone

Bradley Deadstone

Bradley Headstone

Miss Pitcher

and hailing pupil

Selfish boy

and Selfish Schoolmaster.

Very particular within

Smith Square, Westminster

"The person of the house"—Doll's Dress Maker

CHAPTER II

STILL EDUCATIONAL

Eugene, and his proposal

Why the Dolls' Dress Maker is "the person of the house" Her drunken father  
Her imaginative side, and earthy side

CHAPTER III

A PIECE OF WORK

Veneering in Parliament

For Ticklepocket?

Twitchpocket?

"We must work" Pocket Breaches

Veneering's two neat points

[LEAF VII, BACK]

The orphan and Sloppy? No.—Next N?

Lizzie? Very slightly. Carry through Mr & Mrs Lammle and Miss Podsnap? Yes  
—and a new man? Yes

Young Fledgeby  
Conversation Fledgeby  
Fascination Fledgeby

Rumty

Mortimer Lightwood and Eugene together? No

Yes Elaborately

[LEAF VII, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—N? VII)

CHAPTER IV

~~CUPID-PROMPTING~~ PROMPTED

Mr and Mrs Lammle following up their plot

Consequently:—Georgia Podsnap

and—Conversation Fledgeby

Fascination

Dinner. opera. Lammles make all the love

all done by deputy Mrs  
Lammle pats her head as  
if it was Fledgeby pat-  
ting it  
Soda-water touch

But they won't come to-  
gether, no!  
Alfred would like to  
knock 'em together  
by their heads  
"Money in her own  
right?"  
"Aye Sophronia."

CHAPTER V

MERCURY PROMPTING

Quarrel scene between the two; one dastard just getting the start of the other.

"Give me your nose Sir, give me your nose!"

To St Mary Axe?

The gentle Jew

Crutched Friars?

—Oden?

Minories?

—Reheiah?

Goodman's Fields

—Riah?

The Christian employing the Jew. "But they won't believe me."

House-top. Lizzie. Jenny Wren.



## CHAPTER VI

### A RIDDLE WITHOUT AN ANSWER

Mortimer and Eugene living together

The domestic virtues

To Them, Young Hexam and Bradley

So work to "What is the end of it? What are you doing? ~~What~~ Where are you going? "I am an embodied conundrum. Riddle-me, riddle-me ree, perhaps you can't tell me what this may be.—No, upon my life and soul, I can't!"

[Leaf VIII, BACK]

Mr Wegg? Yes and Venus

The Boffins?

and the Secretary?  
and Bella?

Yes

Pursue the orphan and Sloppy

Work on the story

With the Secretary and Bella

Rumty? Reserve him to be Bella's friend and confidant

Mem: Two more interviews between Bradley Headstone and Lizzie before the close of Book The Second. One in N° IX? and one in N° X?

Note. Boffin was left one mound, before the whole property reverted to him through the death of the son.

[LEAF VIII, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—N° VIII)

## CHAPTER VII

### IN WHICH A FRIENDLY MOVE IS ORIGINATED

Wegg and Venus

To search together, and divide together.

Master George, Aunt Jane, and Uncle Parker, those great creatures, all superseded and gone.

## CHAPTER VIII

### IN WHICH AN INNOCENT ELOPEMENT OCCURS

Pave the way to Rumty's being Bella's friend and confidant

They have a day out together.

She spends her money in buying him clothes and treating him.

Says she is mercenary and why. But indicate better qualities.

Interest the reader in her

## CHAPTER IX

### IN WHICH THE ORPHAN MAKES HIS WILL

carry through Betty Higden

So to the children's Hospital

"Hm!—Those"

and "a kiss for the boofer lady"

~~Chapter X~~

~~Not room for 4 chapters. N<sup>o</sup> in 3~~

CHAPTER X

A SUCCESSOR

Sloppy appointed

---

[LEAF IX, BACK]

Lizzie Hexam. Yes

and Bradley. Yes

Miss Peecher? Yes

Jenny Wren Yes

Riah No

Veneerings, Twemlow, Tippins, Boots and Brewer. No

The Fellowship Porters

Miss Potterson

and her brother (from page 23) | No

Riderhood?

and his Daughter?

Yes

Work up to scene in next N<sup>o</sup> between Lizzie, Her brother, and Bradley Headstone

[LEAF IX, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—N<sup>o</sup> IX)

CHAPTER XI

SOME AFFAIRS OF THE HEART

The State of Miss Peecher's heart

of Bradley's

of Lizzie's (extracted by Miss Wren)

Lead on to another scene between Bradley and Lizzie

CHAPTER XII

MORE BIRDS OF PREY

Riderhood's abode

Miss Pleasant Riderhood. A leaving shop.

Secretary disguised. Work on to possessing the reader with the fact that he is John Harmon

CHAPTER XIII

A SOLO AND A DUETT

John Harmon as he goes, recalls the whole story

all but proposes then—opportunity is fitting when he gets back—to Bella

Bella impatient and resentful

Bury John Harmon under mounds and mounds! Crush him! Cover him! Keep him down!

[LEAF X, BACK]

Mrs Higden goes into the country—Yes

Declaration scene between Bradley  
and Lizzie

Yes

Mrs Lammle and Twemlow. Yes . To conclude the book II

Veneering, Tippins, Boots and Brewer.

[LEAF X, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—Nº X)

CHAPTER XIV

STRONG OF PURPOSE

Gather up Boffin Threads

Mrs Higden in her independence goes away

Patrons and Vice Patrons

CHAPTER XV

THE WHOLE CASE SO FAR

~~City church at~~

City churchyard at dusk

Bradley Headstone's love

"Love could draw me to fire—

water —

Gallows —

what not!"

His hand upon the  
coping.

Wrenching at it while  
he speaks

Declared

Rejected

Brother renounces Sister

Riah on the scene and glimpses of Eugene:

Leading on to disappearance.

CHAPTER XVI

AN ANNIVERSARY OCCASION

The Lammles' Wedding Day—First anniversary

Back to the man from somewhere. Lightwood

Lizzie's Disappearance

Book of Portraits

Shut the book

Mrs Lammles to Twemlow

THE END OF THE SECOND BOOK

[LEAF XI, BACK]

Position of affairs at the end of the Second Book (N<sup>o</sup> X)

Lizzie has disappeared, by the aid of the good Jew: leaving as to that part of the story:

Eugene  
The Doll's Dress Maker  
Mr bad child  
Bradley Headstone (and Charley?)  
Miss Peecher

John Harmon is known to the reader, and involves on to that part of the story:

Bella  
Mr and Mrs Boffin

With the Bower are concerned:

The Dustmounds  
The friendly move between Silas Wegg and Venus  
Check-mate on the part of Harmon and Sloppy

With the chorus, rest:

Humbug, Social and Parliamentary  
Twemlow's promise as to Georgiana  
Mrs Lammle's development  
Fledgeby's use of power?

There remain, besides, for implements and otherwise:

The Wilfers (notably Rumty)  
George Sampson  
Riah  
Betty Higden  
Lightwood  
Riderhood and his daughter  
The Six Jolly Fellowships.—Miss Abbey Potterson  
Job Potterson  
Jacob Kibble

[LEAF XI, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—N<sup>o</sup> XI)

BOOK THE THIRD: A LONG LANE

CHAPTER I

LODGERS IN QUEER STREET

Fledgeby's chambers. Fog

Riah Lammle

Work up and on

Lizzie Hexam's  
disappearance

CHAPTER II

~~AN OLD~~ RESPECTED FRIEND IN A NEW ASPECT

Dolls' Dress Maker and Riah

The Great Ladies "trying on" the dolls' dresses

To the Fellowship Porters

The litter  
bumping at the door

Riderhood brought in, drowned

### CHAPTER III

#### RESPECTED

##### THE SAME FRIEND IN MORE ASPECTS THAN ONE

Process of recovery  
while it is a struggling spark of life, it is not Riderhood  
when it animates Riderhood, it is Riderhood

Goes out of the Ring

As if he had had a Fight!

### CHAPTER IV

#### A HAPPY RETURN OF THE DAY

Mr and Mrs Wilfer's Wedding Day

Mr George Sampson

Work up to Bella's account of the change in Mr Boffin—broken to the reader through her—

Mercenary Bella, Money, Money, money

Lay the ground very carefully all through

[LEAF XII, BACK]

Mr Boffin ]  
Wegg?     Yes  
Venus? ]

Work the Lammles into the Boffins' house? Yes

Mr Wegg's unspeakable affection for Mr Venus

[LEAF XII, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—Nº XII)

### CHAPTER V

#### THE GOLDEN DUSTMAN FALLS INTO BAD COMPANY

Mr Boffin and Rokesmith and Mrs Boffin, having, unknown to reader, arranged their plan, now strike in with it

~~chock~~

She always touched and hurt by even the pretended change in her husband. Can't bear Bella to see him so.

Misers

Work in The Misers—to bring out his pretended love of money

Lay the ground for Mrs Lammle

Keep Bella watching,  
and never suspecting

Bella at war with herself

### CHAPTER VI

#### THE GOLDEN DUSTMAN FALLS INTO STILL WORSE COMPANY

The Bower, and Wegg and Venus

Wegg trying to jockey Venus

More books, and the misers, and about hidden wiles  
relieve by making Wegg as comic as possible

Mr Boffin and the Mounds, and the Bottle he  digs up

The Mounds begin to go.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE FRIENDLY MOVE TAKES UP A STRONG POSITION

Mr Wegg's discovery (reserved from Venus until forced out)

Scene between them how it shall be used against Mr Boffin:—"Wait till the Mounds are gone."

Venus's love is Pleasant Riderhood

all the Property left  
to the Crown. This  
the last-dated will.

[LEAF XIII, BACK]

Betty Higden's Flight and Death

Lizzie finds her

Lizzie and Bella come together

And Mr Boffin?

And Rokesmith?

Yes

Lizzie to work an influence on Bella's character, at its wavering point.

Wrayburn for the last chapter? Yes

[LEAF XIII, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—Nº XIII)

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE END OF A LONG JOURNEY

Betty Higden's Flight as she finds herself failing

— Fear  
— and Death

Riderhood  
Deputy  
Lock Keeper

Found by Lizzie—Dies at the Paper Mill

The foot of the Cross

"Now lift me, my dear."

## CHAPTER IX

### SOMEBODY BECOMES THE SUBJECT OF A PREDICTION

"This Our Sister"

Mr and Mrs Milvey. Bella—Secretary and Sloppy

Interview with the Secretary, and then with Lizzie

Bella perceived to contrast  
herself with Lizzie

Stations shutting their  
green eyes and opening  
their red ones as they  
let the Boofer lady go  
by

## CHAPTER X

### SCOUTS OUT

The wretched "old boy" turns traitor

Scene with Eugene

The Schoolmaster on the watch

"The pleasures of the chase."

[LEAF XIV, BACK]

Work out Riah and Fledgeby? ] Yes  
and the power over the others? ] Yes

Twemlow? Yes

And Mrs Lammle? Yes

And the chorus? Next time

Mr Venus and Mr Boffin. Yes

Riderhood? Yes With Bradley

and Pleasant? No

[LEAF XIV, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—N<sup>o</sup> XIV)

CHAPTER XI

IN THE DARK

Bradley's state  
of mind

Bradley Headstone and Riderhood

Get them together

Let him know where to find Riderhood

Plashwater Weir Mill Lock

CHAPTER XII

MEANING MISCHIEF

Mr and Mrs Lammle and their plot. Lead on carefully, to Bella in N<sup>o</sup> XV. Make all the ground  
his feet.

Fascination Fledgeby, and his ingenuous use of a confidence.

"Toddle, Judah!"

CHAPTER XIII

GIVE A DOG A BAD NAME, AND HANG HIM

Dolls' Dress Maker

The Counting House in St. Mary Axe

Twemlow in difficulties

The Dog with the bad name

Work  
Fledgeby

"You are not the Godmother—but the Wolf."

CHAPTER XIV

MR WEGG PREPARES A GRINDSTONE FOR MR BOFFIN'S NOSE

Venus relents and honestly backs out of the Friendly Move

Scene with him and Mr Boffin in the shop.

Wegg overheard by Mr Boffin

Behind the  
Alligator

Work round to Mrs Lammle, to close

[LEAF XV, BACK]

Work out the pious fraud concerted between Mrs Boffin—Mr Boffin—and John Rokesmith  
Make the most of Bella

Mr Twemlow ? Yes

And Mrs Lammle

[LEAF XV, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—N<sup>o</sup> XV)

CHAPTER XV

THE TRIUMPH OF THE MONSTER

GOLDEN DUSTMAN AT HIS WORST

Mr Boffin, feigning indignation with the Secretary for what Mrs Lammle has told him, affronts and discharges Secretary

Bring out Bella—"I must go home.—I can't stay here.

And goes away

No money—no Dresses—no anything.

CHAPTER XVI

THE FEAST OF THE THREE HOBGOBLINS

Bella goes to her father at Mincing Lane

John Rokesmith

The three pennyworths  
of milk and the three cottage  
loaves.

The return home

CHAPTER XVII

A SOCIAL CHORUS

The Veneerings and chorus generally

People going to smash, impossible to be accounted for

Mrs Lammle  
and  
Twemlow. Lead up  
to Fledgeby's cor-  
poral punishment

Lead up to Veneering's getting into Parliamentary scrape

Young Blight  
comes

And to Lizzie and Eugene.  
Close with that

THE END OF THE THIRD BOOK

[LEAF XVI, BACK]

The Runaway Match

Wegg insults Mr Boffin: who seems to quail before him.

Eugene's pursuit

Mr Bradley Headstone | Yes

Riderhood ? •

Charley Hexam ? No

Open at Plashwater Weir Mill Lock, and prepare for the attack upon Eugene.

The Lammles fail with Mr Boffin ?

Georgiana ?

Yes

And end them.

[LEAF XVI, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—N° XVI)

BOOK THE FOURTH A TURNING

CHAPTER I

SETTING ~~TWO~~ TRAPS

Picture of Plashwater Weir Mill Lock

Eugene coming up the river, after Lizzie

Tracked by Bradley disguised

"Why dressed like me?" thinks Riderhood.—Can't quite make out.

The Red Neck-kerchief

"The man as has  
been brought through  
drowning, can't  
be drowned."

CHAPTER II

THE GOLDEN DUSTMAN RISES A LITTLE

Mr Boffin quietly disposes of the Lammles, nips their designs in the bud.

End of the Lammles

End of Georgiana

CHAPTER III

THE GOLDEN DUSTMAN SINKS AGAIN

Mr Boffin seems to quail before the bullying Wegg

Insolence of power on Wegg's part.

Lead on to "check-mate" chapter in N° XIX

CHAPTER IV

A RUNAWAY MATCH

Bella runs away with her father, to marry John Rokesmith  
Greenwich

And an old Pensioner.

Dinner at the Hotel where the "Innocent Elopement" came off.

The ships "sailing to us from the unknown seas."

[LEAF XVII, BACK]

The Wilfers. Miss Lavinia executes her first hysterics  
Bella at home John Roksmith's secret.  
British Housewife.  
The baby coming

The attack upon Eugene

~~Eugene app-~~ Lizzie saves him\*

Back to the opening chapter of the story

[LEAF XVII, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—Nº XVII)

CHAPTER V

CONCERNING THE MENDICANT'S BRIDE.

Mrs Wilfer is of opinion that her child has united herself to "a mendicant."

Miss Lavvy's first hysterics

Then Bella's visit home.

Then her housekeeping and pleasant ways.

Her husband harping on how she would like to be rich

And so to her being in the family-way.

CHAPTER VI

A CRY FOR HELP

Open with the Paper Mill village on a Saturday Night

And a wretched little Fair.

Eugene alone, except for a Bargeman lying on his face.—And what's there in that?

Scene between Eugene and Lizzie

Attack on Eugene

Rescue by Lizzie

Back to the opening  
chapter of the book,  
Strongly

CHAPTER VII

BETTER TO BE ABEL THAN CAIN

Riderhood turns spie on Bradley.

Indication derived therefrom, how Bradley did it. All his plot shewn.

Pursue Bradley, and unrepentant state of mind

Charley Hexam renounces him. The wretched creature affected by this selfishness.

Charley not wanted any more. Hints out his own future career



[LEAF XVIII, BACK]

Dolls' Dress Maker and her bad child

The Jew

Fledgeby? Caned by Lammle.

Eugene married to Lizzie, on his sick bed, by the Rev: Frank Milvey.

Eugene dying.

Kill Mr Dolls?

Funeral of Mr Dolls

"I hope I should amend, if I recovered," says Eugene, "but I am afraid I shouldn't!"

[LEAF XVIII, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—Nº XVIII)

CHAPTER VIII

A FEW GRAINS OF PEPPER

Fascination Fledgeby soundly flogged by Lammle

Mrs Lammle keeping watch

Described through the Dolls' Dress Maker who favors him with the title of the chapter

CHAPTER IX

TWO PLACES VACATED

Riah, the Jew

Death of the bad child

Dolls' Dress Maker fetched to Eugene by Lightwood

So:

Get the Dolls' Dress Maker to nurse Eugene

CHAPTER X

THE DOLLS' DRESS MAKER ~~FINDS~~ DISCOVERS A WORD

And the word is : "wife"

~~The marriage chapter~~

CHAPTER XI

EFFECT IS GIVEN TO THE DOLLS' DRESS MAKER'S DISCOVERY

The marriage  
chapter

Open with Bella, and her husband's mystery.

Then, the Milvey's

Glimpse of Bradley in his misery. And then the marriage: "I think upon the whole I had better die, my dear."

[LEAF XIX, BACK]

a pause.—opening after Bella's child is born

The Inexhaustible Baby

Check-mate to the Friendly Move  
Defeat and disgrace of Silas Wegg  
John Rokesmith  
His supposed poverty  
He seems under suspicion of murder  
Bella always faithful

chapters  
Mr Wegg's Grindstone sharpens  
the wrong nose?  
Showing How the Golden Dustman  
scattered Dust?  
Check Mate to the Friendly  
Move?  
The Trial?  
The Cat, the Duck, and the Dog?  
Bow-Wow?  
The whole case to the end?

x over  
Mr Boffin and his story,  
concerning the Dutch bot-  
tle and its contents

The Fellowship Porters  
The Steward and the Fellow-  
Passenger

~~He Tells~~ how Mrs Boffin found him out

How she, and he, and Mrs Boffin plotted:  
—and why (To reclaim Bella).  
—and how it proves Bella to be the best and dearest of girls  
—and how she is Mrs John Harmon, and comes into no end of money

Also how he feigned, and why, clearing him and Mrs Boffin, and shewing them to be the best  
of honest creatures

XX OVER XX

Riderhood and Bradley at the Lock again. Riderhood turns on Bradley and shows him how he  
(Bradley) plotted to throw the appearance of guilt on him (Riderhood). Swears he'll know all  
about him, and will never leave him unless well paid. Bradley seizes him on the brink of the  
Lock at last, "It's no use. I can't be drowned."—"We'll try!" Holds him tight, falls in with him  
purposely. Still holds him tight. Both drowned.

Mr Venus

~~Silas Wegg~~ and Pleasant Riderhood become a couple

Sloppy and Miss Wren Ditto in perspective

Eugene and Lizzie Hexam. The dawn of their new life

Total smash of the Veneerings. He retires to Boulogne, and says thereafter of all the other  
Members of the House of Commons, that they were the six hundred and odd dearest friends he  
ever had in the world.—

End of Social chorus generally.

Twemlow?

Riah?

Mortimer Lightwood?

"And so," says Mr Boffin radiantly, quoting himself in his feigning: "Mew, quack quack,  
Bow wow!"

[LEAF XIX, INSIDE BACK]

x

In the Dutch Bottle was the latest will of all (found by Mr Boffin), leaving him all the Property, to the disinheriting and excluding of John Harmon. "No," said Mr Boffin, on finding it, "this will shall never see the light. This slur shall never be cast upon young John, through my instrumentality." But not knowing what to do with it, and fearful that it might be a crime at law to destroy it, buried it again for the time being. Finding certain signs (through Sloppy) that Wegg was poking about, and delving in the Mounds, took it up again. So the Friendly Move receives check-mate, and the move only shows Mr Boffin in a brighter light.

xx

Mrs Boffin's uneasiness while their little plot with John Harmon was working out, arose from her wifely affection being perpetually at war against Mr Boffin's pretence of being a Miser, and a man quite spoiled by prosperity.

[LEAF XIX, FRONT]

(OUR MUTUAL FRIEND—N<sup>os</sup> XIX AND XX)

CHAPTER XII

THE PASSING ~~THE~~ SHADOW ~~OF THE HARMON MURDER~~

John Harmon under suspicion of his own murder

Bella fully trusting

Mr Inspector's eyes opened Baby

CHAPTER XIII

SHOWING HOW THE GOLDEN DUSTMAN HELPED TO SCATTER DUST

Unwind the Boffin mystery, chiefly through Mrs Boffin

with  
great care

Baby

CHAPTER XIV

CHECK-MATE TO THE FRIENDLY MOVE

Unwind Venus and Wegg.

Sloppy

Pitch Wegg into a mud cart

with  
great care

CHAPTER XV

WHAT WAS CAUGHT IN THE TRAPS THAT WERE SET

Bradley's state of mind. Riderhood in the school. And the black board

The Lock House again

And the drowning of the two

CHAPTER XVI

PERSONS AND THINGS IN GENERAL

Pa and Ma and Lavvy and George

Riah—Twemlow—Miss Wren and Sloppy Work through to Eugene & wife

## CHAPTER XVII THE LAST

### VOICE

#### THE VOICE OF SOCIETY

about Eugene's marriage

Is the voice Veneerings?  
Or Mrs Veneering's?  
or Lady Tippins's  
or Boots's?  
or Brewer's  
or the Directors'  
or the Contractor's?

And is it worth much, after all?

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## REVIEW ARTICLE

### BRANCH II OF THE FRENCH ALEXANDER

THE monumental edition of the *Roman d'Alexandre* for which Professor Armstrong laid plans more than fifteen years ago has now reached its fourth published volume. Medievalists have been watching with particular interest the development of this enormous labor of collaboration, the only one of its kind to be carried forward so successfully by a group of American scholars in the Old French field. It has long been known that the extant versions of the *Roman d'Alexandre* present endless complexities, which are often bewildering in the extreme: the editors' treatment of these continues to represent a triumph of distinguished research.

The first volume, published in 1937 by Professor Milan S. La Du of Syracuse University, provides accurate reprints of the important Arsenal and Venice manuscripts. Mr. La Du's account of the Arsenal copy in particular is a model of intelligent thoroughness. The second volume, also appearing in 1937, gives the critical text of the complete poem in the form inherited from Alexandre de Paris (15,924 verses, dated in the ninth decade of the twelfth century). In a brief introduction, Professor Armstrong sketches the history of the French legend, outlines the manuscript filiation, and indicates canons for establishing the critical text. The substantiating evidence was reserved for subsequent volumes of the edition. This evidence is now supplied for Branch II of the poem in the two volumes (IV-V) to be reviewed here.<sup>1</sup> Volume III is to contain similar materials for Branch I.

In passing, be it remembered that the volume of critical text is an admirable contribution to the discussion of editorial practice which has been particularly animated since Bédier's *Lai de l'ombre* of 1913. Recalling that "there can be no inflexible rules for text editing," Armstrong correctly argues that the *Roman d'Alexandre* dictates, of itself, a faithful reprinting of the Arsenal and Venice manuscripts (despite their fatuous copyists), followed by an essentially composite text for Alexandre de Paris. Thus, the poem appears today as a learned mosaic, but one which clarifies and accents extraordinary discoveries and which resists criticism on grounds of supposed orthodoxy (or what Jeanroy calls the editorial "errements du jour"). The *Roman d'Alexandre* insisted, as it were, on its personal rights, which the present text has recognized with fitting objectivity.

The monograph prepared in collaboration by Professors Armstrong and Foulet analyzes the growth and structure of the *Fuerre de Gadres* story in Branches I-II of the *Roman d'Alexandre* and concludes with a reconstruction of a lost twelfth-century source. In the fifth volume Professor Agard has assembled the texts and variants which implement our controls for all of Branch II; he has also supplied an elaborate analysis of factors which affect manuscript transmission and supplement the Armstrong-Foulet commentary in the preceding volume. In other words, the two books reviewed here have together abundantly furnished the *apparatus criticus* and discussion which were needed for a proper understanding of Branch II. Disagreement with certain interpretations can in no way detract from the many factual discoveries which now become available.

The complexity of the *Fuerre de Gadres* tradition does not facilitate the situation for the reader who would appraise the full meas-

<sup>1</sup> The medieval French "*Roman d'Alexandre*," Vol. IV: "*Le Roman du fuerre de Gadres*" d'Eustache: *essai d'établissement de ce poème du xii<sup>e</sup> siècle tel qu'il a existé avant d'être incorporé dans le "Roman d'Alexandre," avec les deux récits latins qui lui sont apparentés*. Par E. C. ARMSTRONG et ALFRED FOULET. Vol. V: *Version of Alexandre de Paris: variants and notes to Branch II*. With an Introduction by FREDERICK B. AGARD. ("Elliott monographs," Nos. 39-40.) Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1942. Pp. viii + 110; v + 250.



ure of accomplishment in the Armstrong-Foulet volume. Accordingly, the editors have concluded their work with a detailed index which controls their commentary and catalogues a mine of valuable information for the general student of Old French. Also, Volume II begins with a diagram showing the brilliant solution which Armstrong has reached concerning transmission of the French Alexander; this diagram is an indispensable aid to the reader of Volume IV.

Although the Furre de Gadres story, for the twentieth-century reader, is more crushingly dull than almost anything in Old French, it was, nevertheless, popular enough in its day to form the basis for at least three separate medieval texts. The editors have, of course, recognized the existence of the narrative by a misty twelfth-century Eustache, and they have included a good new edition (with complete facsimile) of the short Latin version conserved at Florence in a manuscript dated 1348. In addition, they have established the existence of a "Gadifer Version" derived from the text of Alexandre de Paris. Lastly, they have focused attention on a passage of some three hundred verses, inserted in Branch III and now labeled the "Furre au Val Daniel." One of the more ingenious efforts in recent Old French research is their reconstitution of the text which the editors attribute to Eustache (IV, 89-103).

Foulet's particular assignment in the Alexander project has been the study of sources for the poem. His knowledge of medieval literature relating to the Crusades has already rendered handsome service to the Princeton Alexander. This is conspicuous in his discussion (IV, 6-10) of materials reflected in the *Historia de preliis* bearing upon the Furre de Gadres. Foulet's success with the sources has been remarkably effective in the contribution of Volume IV to dissection of the style and workmanship of Alexandre de Paris; this is obvious, for example, in his treatment of Foucher de Chartres (p. 31) and of William of Tyre (pp. 59-62). Minutiae concerning Jacques de Vitry and Chrétien de Troyes (p. 64, nn. 2-3) are further good cases in point.

The analysis of the Furre which occupies

pages 37-88 is a patient and courageous treatment of depressing material. Here the editors review, *laisse* by *laisse* (in fact, almost line by line), the genesis of all the materials left from Alexandre de Paris. The commentary on *laissez* 85-109 (pp. 81-88) is one of the best examples of this type of research. The exhaustiveness of the Armstrong-Foulet volume is again in evidence in the treatment of such puzzles as the Gaza-Gadara parallel (pp. 9, 31-34) and the derivation of the name *Oteserie* from *Theoselius* (p. 34).

The reader may be discouraged by the intricacy of the exposition which precedes the reconstituted Eustache; but closer inspection shows that the editors could hardly have given a more orderly description of one of the most deadly manifestations of confusion ever handed down from the Middle Ages.

The most striking result of Volume IV is, of course, the rehabilitation of Eustache, whom the editors have come to regard as the rather gifted author of a unified Furre de Gadres which was "presque nécessairement" (p. 1) in French and which did not exceed 700 twelve-syllable verses (pp. 27, 36). The only medieval allusion to Eustache appears in Branch II (vs. 1777), where Alexandre de Paris merely remarks: "Ce nos raconte Eustache." The fact that the Princeton edition rebuilds more than 500 verses of an author so vaguely described in the Middle Ages invites a re-examination of the evidence in justification. Although the volumes here under review apparently contain the editors' final word on Branch II, it is possible that questions concerning the Furre de Gadres will be reopened in later chapters. If so, the questions which arise at this time will find their full answers in due course. In fact, it is hoped that the editors will return to Eustache in any case, because the principal interpretations thus far advanced do not seem conclusive (at least to this reviewer).

In terms of Volume IV, it may be taken as proved that an Eustache did exist and that he did write a Furre de Gadres. It may also be taken as proved that the following Fures (listed chronologically) were seriously influ-

enced, in varying ways, by materials in Eustache: (1) the Val Daniel episode in Branch III (vss. 5648-5925); (2) the Furre of Alexandre de Paris; (3) the Latin Furre at Florence. It is evident that Eustache made use of elements also present in an episode of the *Historia de preliis* (published in IV, 11-12). With the single exception of Alexandre de Paris, these extant texts of the Furre are fairly brief. Furthermore, the Florence version is so crude as to have the appearance of a school exercise in translation. Also, the editors have drawn the very reasonable conclusion that, in Branch II, Alexandre de Paris was not immune to the virus of interpolation. I see no reason to question the findings just summarized, but nothing more is established in the six-point outline on pages 1-2.

The editors are certain that Eustache wrote a "petit chef-d'œuvre" (IV, 88) in French, "un poème consacré au point d'honneur" (IV, 48). Reduced to its simplest terms, their theory seems to be based on the following observations: (1) Eustache used the *Historia de preliis* episode as his principal source, and this episode is very short; (2) the Florence version, also fairly short, is taken as a translation of Eustache; (3) the Val Daniel episode, similar to Eustache except for important names, has fewer than three hundred verses; (4) the nucleus of the Furre story lends itself to concision and unity; (5) Alexandre de Paris, being addicted to interpolation, must have utilized as chief source a model which is therefore brief and which furthermore would be identified only as Eustache; (6) the evidence just summarized points collectively to an Eustache poem of the type specified by the editors, whereas there is apparently no positive testimony in favor of something ill-formed or discursive. The editors, however, do not assemble this argumentation very directly, leaving it to the reader to organize it for himself as he goes along. The same criticism applies to additional bits of evidence which might perhaps support French as the language chosen by Eustache, who is presumed to have devised occasional proper names for purposes of rhyme (IV, 30, 35) and whose supposed use of *berfrois* is presumed to have inspired the

hapax *perfriht* in the *Alexanderlied* of Lamprecht (IV, 78). The outline on pages 1-2 shows the existence of Eustache, but not his imagined brevity or his preference for French.

It is, indeed, possible that Eustache wrote a poem corresponding to the editors' interpretation of available data. In fact, they say categorically (IV, 37) that there is "aucun doute quant au fond, et pas trop d'hésitations pour ce qui est du texte." Admittedly, if Eustache wrote in French and if he was a concise writer using alexandrine meter, this statement by the editors might pass muster. But for reasons which I shall now attempt to outline, I do not believe that we can with such certainty know anywhere near this much about Eustache.

#### I. HISTORIA DE PRELIIS

Thirty years ago, Friedrich Pfister argued that the Furre de Gadres episode in the *Historia de preliis* (IV, 11-12) was an abridgment of a much more substantial text. Even without the rebuttal by the editors (IV, 4-5), it is easy to see that the longer original need not necessarily have existed. But their refutation of Pfister's undue precision is supported in part by the claim that Eustache wrote a short poem from which he suppressed, "tout naturellement," certain digressions. Incidentally, the "tout naturellement" is categorical; but much later in the monograph (p. 77, n. 25) the editors soften it a little by saying that Eustache "a dû écarter" the digressions in question. At this latter point in the discussion it has become clear that it is the absence of these digressions from Alexandre de Paris which implied their omission from Eustache as well.

After criticizing Pfister, the editors say that his arguments, therefore, "nous laissent absolument libres d'accepter" the *Historia* episode as the source of Eustache and as the earliest version of the Furre de Gadres. And if there were only Pfister to worry them, their conclusion would be justified. But this still does not touch the support which they think the *Historia* gives (cf. IV, 37) to prove that Eustache wrote a short poem. Possibly the refutation of Pfister is taken to be proof enough; but it is hard to believe that the edi-

tors consider it as establishing the character of Eustache, for the obvious reason that their argument would thus become a *petitio principii*. Such a criticism would not be even hinted at here, were it not that the editors have failed to invoke the *Historia* in any further way as proof of their hypothesis. Their use of the *Historia* (pp. 37 ff.) apparently presupposes acceptance of it as the source of Eustache.

It is, of course, quite possible that Eustache utilized the short *Historia* episode in the form which is extant today. But there is still no demonstration to deny the existence of a longer source either for Eustache or for the *Historia* version. The *Historia* taken by itself, then, scarcely yields even presumptive evidence in favor of a concise Eustache.

## II. PSEUDO-BOCCACCIO

The Latin *Fuerre*, in the Florence manuscript of 1348, contains materials corresponding to the first 32 *laissez* of the Branch II *Fuerre*, but the Latin is only about three-tenths as long as the parallel section in Alexandre de Paris. Incomplete as it is, the Latin *Fuerre* is already nearly three times as long as the entire *Historia de preliis* episode. The Florence copyist broke off near the top of a page, without troubling to finish the story. The editors are satisfied that this copyist was Boccaccio (IV, 16)—a conclusion seriously questioned by Mrs. Tenney Frank on grounds of calligraphy (*Modern language notes*, LVIII [1943], 205). The Latin *Fuerre* will be referred to here as the "pseudo-Boccaccio."

The editors of the *Roman d'Alexandre* hold that the pseudo-Boccaccio original was written only a short time before its appearance in the Florence manuscript. Their evidence consists of certain phrases reflecting "un de ces courants d'humanisme dont devait sortir la Renaissance." Is there any reason to suppose that these phrases were necessarily included in the original and that they could not have come in via the pseudo-Boccaccio or some other copyist? The date of the first Latin version still remains very vague.

As the editors say (IV, 15), the pseudo-

Boccaccio differs appreciably from the *Fuerre* in the *Historia*. They are also willing to date the pseudo-Boccaccio a good century and a half after Eustache, who is placed before 1165 (IV, 36). They concede that, at first glance, the pseudo-Boccaccio looks like a translation of materials borrowed from Alexandre de Paris. Furthermore, at least four manuscripts of Italian origin contain the latter's Branch II *Fuerre*. How, then, can it be concluded that the pseudo-Boccaccio is *perforce* taken from the remote Eustache and not from a form of the Alexander legend which is known to have had fourteenth-century currency in Italy?

The editors base their view of the pseudo-Boccaccio on the passages from Alexandre de Paris (Branch II, vss. 1-675) which the Latin does not preserve. They take these passages to be evident interpolations or else items readily attributed to Alexandre de Paris alone. But in the next paragraph they go on to say that without the pseudo-Boccaccio it would have been "bien plus difficile" to recover Eustache, because the Latin enables one to decide whether or not single verses, groups of verses, or even whole *laissez* should be credited to Alexandre de Paris. The circularity of this reasoning becomes more serious in the light of the Quintus Curtius discussion to be brought up further on in this review. But nothing in the editors' argument forces acceptance, as yet, of the pseudo-Boccaccio as a translation of Eustache.

Nobody questions the poor quality of the pseudo-Boccaccio. Would it, then, be unreasonable to suppose that the copyist (if not the original perpetrator), after reaching a convenient stopping-point, succumbed to boredom and left his text unfinished? This would certainly be understandable if he were working from the narrative of Alexandre de Paris. It would be less understandable if he were working from the jewel of poetic concision which the editors would credit to Eustache. After all, it wanted barely one leaf in the Florence manuscript for the pseudo-Boccaccio to finish his assignment. Hence, even if he did have Eustache before him, his performance provides no comfort, real or implied, for the believer in the laconicism of his model.

## III. FURRE AU VAL DANIEL

In a later volume the editors plan to demonstrate that the Val Daniel episode is a Furre story introduced into the French poem before the version of Alexandre de Paris (cf. the diagram, II, viii). For the moment it is sufficient to remark that the Val Daniel was in a lost "Amalgam," which must have existed by reason of serving as the common ancestor for three extant manuscripts of the cyclic Alexander poem. There is also no doubt that the Val Daniel could be derived from the *Historia de preliis* episode. The editors of the *Roman d'Alexandre* consider Eustache to be the immediate source for the Val Daniel, a perfectly possible conclusion. It is to be observed that the Val Daniel gives different names to important scenes and characters, as against the essential agreement of the Branch II Furre with the *Historia*.

Primarily on the basis of pages 23-24, one infers from the considerations outlined in the preceding paragraph that material agreement between Alexandre de Paris and the Amalgam against the pseudo-Boccaccio (and the *Historia*) points to alignment of Eustache with the pseudo-Boccaccio. Thus the editors believe that elements present in Alexandre de Paris and the Amalgam were absent from Eustache wherever such elements do not also figure in the pseudo-Boccaccio. This hypothesis is tenable, however, if and only if the pseudo-Boccaccio is actually proved to be a faithful translation of Eustache. And it has just been seen that such proof is still far from realization. Therefore, how can the editors repose much faith in the Val Daniel episode (cf. IV, 37) as a guide in the reconstruction of Eustache? In this connection, incidentally, it is noted that the index omits references to comments on the Val Daniel on pages 1, 35, 37, 86-87 (indirect); no cross-references connect the entries "Daniel," "Furre au Val Daniel," and "Val Daniel."

## IV. FURRE THEME

A conflict between *sagesse* and *prouesse* forms the nucleus of what could be a well-unified Furre story. Eustache may have ap-

preciated this, but twentieth-century taste and twelfth-century possibility are not sufficient to show what his sense of unity really was.

## V. INTERPOLATIONS BY ALEXANDRE DE PARIS

The evidence concerning the workmanship of Alexandre de Paris in Branch II has been minutely combed by the editors, and Foulet's accumulation of sources and parallels is masterly. The only issue here is on the side of interpretation. Like most medieval versifiers, Alexandre de Paris has said extremely little about his methods; but it is clear that his personal vagaries are at least not less fundamental in Branch IV and the Furre de Gadres than in the bulk of the poem. In particular, the editors have cited abundant reflections from Quintus Curtius which find no parallel in earlier stages of the cyclic poem. Also visible are parallels with William of Tyre, whose "transmarine" history postdates the period assigned to Eustache. The editors stress the penchant of Alexandre de Paris for direct discourse (notably in the form of "regrets"), for excessive multiplications of battle incidents, for forecasting future events, for duplicating descriptive passages, for unusual rhymes, for the battle cry "Macedoine." Most of these tendencies, of course, are part of the familiar literary luggage of the time. How does all this tie in with Eustache? Alexandre de Paris sticks to business, as it were, in most of Branches I and III; is his principal source in Branch II necessarily of such nature that he did not do pretty much the same in the Furre de Gadres? If the text of Eustache was more discursive than the editors admit, would it be more foolhardy (than not) to suppose that Alexandre de Paris was following somewhat the same method throughout the poem? It will be seen that the available facts do not rule out a negative reply to either of these queries.

Specific evidence for additions by Alexandre de Paris is effectively indicated on page 25, and it is easy to believe that Eustache was not responsible for the four passages which are here invoked by the editors. But even if Eustache did not utilize them, these few passages



still leave us a long way from knowing the actual dimensions of his text.

On the side of the editors are the parallels with William of Tyre, suggesting that Alexandre de Paris could equally well have drawn directly from Quintus Curtius without recourse to intermediaries. Nor is there anything to prove that he did not. But the editors themselves agree (pp. 32, 35) that Eustache also knew his Quintus Curtius, along with a few other sources supplementing the *Historia de preliis*. Having gone that far, how can they claim, even by inference, to know the limits which Eustache set upon his borrowings from Quintus Curtius? And without such information, how can the editors set limits upon the length and content of Eustache himself? Especially where all the other evidence about the size of his offering is so tenuous, such theorizing can do no more than suggest a pleasant possibility. Proximity in Alexandre de Paris is established, but not the absence of proximity from his source(s).

In this same connection, it now becomes pertinent to see how the editors have handled the Gadifer Version (cf. IV, 26-27; V, 100-123). Fifteen *laissez* of this story appear in Branch II of the critical text (vss. 1189-1310, 1330-1634), but the majority of *Roman d'Alexandre* manuscripts provide a fuller and perhaps complete Gadifer Version, which is published in Volume V (pp. 2-100). Within the framework of Branch II, the Gadifer story causes such an upheaval among the manuscripts (cf. V, 148-49) and strains the narration to such an extent that the editors believe it was a separate poem composed after Alexandre de Paris. They conclude that the Gadifer Version then replaced Alexandre de Paris in one set of manuscripts and supplied the basis for an interpolation in the other. Why does all this tie in with Eustache?

It ties in because the Gadifer Version shows that the editors have felt constrained in at least one place to say that some materials in Branch II are not by Alexandre de Paris at all. This raises the query as to a possibility that such an explanation might also work in one or another portion of Branch II elsewhere (perhaps for *laissez* 85-109; cf. IV, 81-88).

Obviously, the more lines demonstrably absent from the Alexandre de Paris original, the better the editors' case about Eustache. But the manuscript support for such apocrypha involves more possibility than certitude. In other words, not only the length of Eustache but also the proportions of Alexandre de Paris will have to stand as a question still very much unsettled.

#### VI. CUMULATIVE VALUE OF THE EVIDENCE

Probabilities taken cumulatively can often present a strong case for the conclusion toward which they point. The preceding paragraphs indicate, however, that each separate link of evidence is too weak to form a proper chain in support of the editors' conception of Eustache. It is true that the available testimony likewise yields no positive grounds for one, and only one, contrary interpretation. But, in the presence of so much sheer vagueness, the editors can scarcely justify defining the Eustache text only within the limits postulated so categorically on page 37. There is a gap between demonstration, on the one hand, and ingenious patterns fashioned from mere interlocking possibilities, on the other.

#### VII. MISCELLANEOUS ABOUT EUSTACHE

In various parts of their monograph, the editors allude to inventions within the text of Eustache (cf. pp. 30, 31, 34, 35, 46, 51, 57). Thus, the lost source of Alexandre de Paris was capable of adding to the *Historia* not only materials from Quintus Curtius but also elements of his own fabrication. In fact, at one point (cf. p. 46) Eustache is "amené à voler de ses propres ailes: il imaginera toute une série d'incidents" not in the *Historia* at all. Particularly after the pseudo-Boccaccio breaks off, how can any specific limits be imposed to circumscribe the independence of Eustache?

Appraisal of Eustache is further confused by the question of dating. The editors set 1165 as *terminus ad quem*, and they favor 1155 over 1139 for the *terminus a quo*. These limits depend on materials which may never have been in Eustache at all. Moreover, Armstrong has placed the decasyllabic Alexander poem at "about 1160" (II, x); but in Volume IV the editors state without reservation (p. 30) that



Eustache precedes the decasyllabic poem. The discussion of Caesarea and of Sanson (pp. 29-30) accordingly stands without adequate defense. There is, moreover, a perfectly admissible possibility that Eustache said more about Sanson than the editors allow. Incidentally, the biblical Samson is a satisfactory source for the name; no need to add a minor character from the *Chanson de Roland* (p. 8).

The editors have introduced a number of questionable details in line with their estimate of Eustache, for instance, the treatment of "Licanor" (p. 28) and of "Arcage" (p. 29). Quintus Curtius and the *Historia* use the spelling "Nicanor," which the pseudo-Boccaccio and Alexandre de Paris replace by "Licanor." Therefore, say the editors, it was Eustache who originated the change. But their interpretation on Arcage puts this reasoning in reverse. In the seven places where Eustache is supposed to have written an equivalent for "Eumenes Cardianus," Alexandre de Paris has "Emenidus d'Arcage," while the pseudo-Boccaccio writes this in full only once, as "Emenidum de Arcadia." Thus there is no medieval testimony here for the "correct" reading "de Carge," but the editors give Eustache credit for the proper accuracy regardless; he was having none of any such commonplace as medieval Arcadia. Why not give him "Nicanor" as well? Incidentally, why "Calafer" in Eustache (p. 57; Branch II, 608) instead of "Sallefax," as in the pseudo-Boccaccio? Another detail, indicative of overenthusiasm for Eustache, is the suggestion (p. 31) that recollection of a historical Balak probably led him to distinguish between nominative "Balés" and accusative "Balec."

The various misgivings underscored in these pages have not been notably constructive, but the dense medieval clouds which envelop Eustache are unlikely to yield anything factual beyond what has already been gleaned by Professors Armstrong and Foulet. Their intuition and experience, plus years of living with Alexandre de Paris and his kind, give them a command of the problems which no outsider can attempt to match. But in the domain of interpretation and guesses, there

is a twilight zone in which intuition can blend into enthusiasm. It is my conviction that Eustache, who may not even have written in French, has led the way deep into the twilight zone. It is always possible, I repeat again, that Eustache may have written exactly as the editors say he did, but other hypotheses loom with similar plausibility. Consequently, it is necessary to point out the risks which their present conclusions must inevitably assume. Fragile possibilities, even supporting one another collectively, do not permit so much as an approximation to the certainty which the edition claims. Future volumes of the *Roman d'Alexandre* may, however, provide answers to the questions which have been raised here and which, for the moment, are still unresolved.

Within the Alexander group, Professor Lawrence F. H. Lowe was to have completed the presentation of Branch II, and it is to him that we owe the careful critical text which occupies pages 74-142 in Volume II. For reasons of health he was obliged to give up publication of the variants and commentary. The fact that Branch II is represented in thirty-two known manuscripts (complete or fragmentary) gives a measure of the labor devoted by Mr. Lowe to the collation which he completed a number of years ago. His edited text contains 3,100 verses, but Volume V now provides more than 2,000 additional lines, present in numerous manuscripts and all previously collated with meticulous thoroughness by Mr. Lowe.

For present purposes it must be noted that the French Alexander manuscripts are divided into three major categories: (1) those based primarily on the lost Amalgam (cf. Vol. I); (2) the  $\alpha$  family, stemming from Alexandre de Paris and serving as the basis for the critical text in Volume II; (3) the  $\beta$  family, also derived from Alexandre de Paris and serving as the basis for Mr. Agard's critical text of 2,038 verses not previously published at Princeton.

Despite the modesty of the preface to Volume V, Mr. Agard has given much more than a storehouse of notes, variants, and *dissecta membra*. His critical text—an extremely difficult one to present—is as essential to the *Ro-*

*man d'Alexandre* as any of the duly constituted branches included in Volume II. His excellent analysis of the "almost continuous interaction among many of the manuscripts" is, of course, of first importance to the Alexander problem. In addition, Mr. Agard prepared the collation for Branch II all over again, and he has now published elaborate variants for each *laisse* of the  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  versions. His notes on Mr. Lowe's text and on his own are copious and valuable. Not the least of Mr. Agard's researches has been the development of three chapters of minute and skilful study on the Gadifer Version. The materials examined in Volume V could never make for easy or fascinating reading, but Mr. Agard has acquitted himself of an arduous and often thankless task with unusual success.

A number of details, occasionally of some importance, call for comment even in a review which does not lay claim to exhaustiveness. In the notes (V, 150-243) to Mr. Lowe's  $\alpha$  version, there appear numerous "errata" referring to the critical text in Volume II. A number of these involve desirable alterations suggested by discoveries which have been made since publication of the poem of Alexandre de Paris. It is probable that such alterations represent not only Mr. Agard's views but those of the editors as a group.

In Volume II (p. xxii) Mr. Armstrong has announced that "naturally no attempt has been made to reconstitute the spellings or inflectional system" of Alexandre de Paris. Except in Branch I, a manuscript (G) with some marked Picard traits serves as the chief single basis for the critical text. "Within the basic manuscripts themselves," says Mr. Armstrong, "no standardization of spelling has been attempted." Two exceptions to this commendable rule, however, are mentioned in a footnote, but "in the other Picardisms of G his usage has not been modified." In the "errata" now published by Mr. Agard, the procedure described by Mr. Armstrong suffers from a few inconsistencies: inflections in verses 19, 186, 439, 442, 514, 587, 615, 1070, 1569, 1757; an inconsequential verb form in verse 1393; a regional spelling in verse 2081. Even the preponderance of manuscript testi-

mony is of no account in these minutiae, nor should the relative inflectional accuracy of G (cf. p. 234) justify such trifling tampering. Furthermore, the note to verse 1068 allows that Alexandre de Paris himself was "subject to similar oversights," and a special point is made of retaining such "errors" in verse 1137. There is further needless preoccupation with inflections in the notes to verses 113, 929-30, 1124, 1153, 1997, 2493, 2865. It is not necessary here to labor the early breakdown of cases in Old French. There is no reason to suppose that any of the foregoing emendations bring the text nearer either to Alexandre de Paris or to the  $\alpha$  redactor. They merely becloud the textual canons adopted for the edition as a whole.

The presentation of variants, especially for a text as substantial as the *Roman d'Alexandre*, raises a question of general interest for editors in Old French. An attempt to preserve all the variants would be manifestly uneconomical, and it is not clear that such an effort would be even profitable. But if the tabulation is to be selective, a subjective element is inevitable. Particularly as to lines of demarcation, the edition of the *Roman d'Alexandre* does not delimit its "purely orthographic" variants or, for that matter, "insignificant" variants in general. In the explanatory note which precedes the text of the  $\beta$  version, Mr. Agard says that he is providing "the full text and, at the end of each stanza, the variant readings and critical notes as well." One might take this to mean that the variants are given in full; but in *laisse* 89, for instance, no variants at all accompany 61 verses out of 105; such harmony among Alexander manuscripts would be surprising. Concerning the variants to the  $\alpha$  text, Mr. Agard states (p. 150) that "in the case of the basic manuscript G and of B, N and V the variants are fully recorded but individual variants of the remaining manuscripts are frequently omitted." As for such omissions, great faith may surely be rested in the common sense of the editors; but the reader would appreciate an explanation enabling him to control the evidence a little more positively. It is therefore suggested here that a later volume of the *Roman d'Alexandre* furnish

a detailed memorandum on the principles of inclusion and exclusion which are guiding the editors. For the present, as with the selective variants in Housman's Juvenal, one welcomes "an enterprise undertaken in humane concern for the relief of a people sitting in darkness."

As for Eustache, Mr. Agard cleaves to the party line. He says, for instance (p. 116), that the theme of *sagesse* versus *prouesse* in the *Fuerre de Gadres* was invented by Eustache. Notes to Mr. Lowe's text which show some overconfidence in Eustache refer to verses 17, 23, 113, 972, 1153-55, 1957-58. On the other hand, in the light of my previous comment about limits assignable to Eustache, it is worth noticing that Mr. Agard (p. 130) mentions a "possibility that the  $\alpha$  source of B and N was a separate edition of the *Fuerre de Gadres* ending with stanza  $\alpha 79$ ."

In conclusion, some remarks on miscellaneous details. The note on page 35 should carry a reference to Branch II, verse 1199 (cf. p. 188). The speculation concerning *nowel roi* (p. 36) is not very constructive in relation to a text which does not seek historical accuracy. Nothing is gained (p. 42) by interpretation of *doit* as a verb of probability. The evidence shows no medieval worry about standardization of the name *Sarçais*; why normalize in the edition (p. 54)? Punctuation of some sort should follow verse 21 (cf. p. 58), or else the reading *Dont* in manuscripts CHL (as in the editors' translation) should begin verse 22 of Mr. Agard's text. The first note on page 66 takes inflection too seriously, and the second note is self-evident. The translation of verse 42 (p. 85) strains the Old French construction, where *pour* can, of course, be causal: but could the verse be a clumsy banality meaning "obviously this gift was not [intended] to prolong the [doctor's] state of want [he being clearly well off anyway]"? In this same line the ICL variant shows no disagreement with the constituted text. The note on *cele gent* (p. 90) keeps to the obvious. The note about the *Coumains* (p. 100) should have a reference to page 207 (despite the index). It is impossible (p. 109) to put *Folque de Candie* earlier than

Jehan le Nevelon solely on the basis of an Arebloi reference in a family of fourteenth-century manuscripts of the *Vengeance Alixandre*. Table 3 (pp. 123-24) would be more helpful in tabular form.

Among Mr. Agard's notes to Mr. Lowe's text, the translation of verse 190 does not seem to require the addition of "soit forcé." The notes to verses 221-25 and 543 should refer to IV, 49 and 55, respectively. Nothing is accomplished by abandonment of G in verses 592 and 1347 or, it seems to me, in 1740-41. "Evidently" and "evident" seem a little excessive in the notes to verses 760-63 and 972. In verse 1217 *Sabilor* has to be dative and *Tyr* must be accusative, so why any note at all? The awkward verse 1898 finds an even clumsier parallel in *Girart de Rossillon*: "Et je pri penduz soie, qu'a tort le mien prendra, / Se je li fau de guerre qu'après ne me pendra" (vss. 681-82). Why not give more stress (vs. 1953) to the value of modern French *déçu*? Needless to explain verse 2348.

## SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

Five months after the above discussion was submitted to *Modern philology*, not only the Alexander edition but medieval French scholarship in general suffered a tragic loss in the death of Professor Armstrong. My association with him over a decade ago impressed me vividly with his powers as one of the great teachers in the United States, a fact which is well known but which I am happy to recall at this time, the more so because Professor Armstrong's reputation is associated primarily with the magnificence of his research.

It is particularly unfortunate that the Alexander edition is not yet complete, although I understand that Professor Armstrong's work on Branch III is nearly ready for publication. Under the able direction of Professors Bateman Edwards and Alfred Foulet, however, there is every reason to anticipate a high standard of research in the remaining volumes.

EDWARD B. HAM

University of Michigan

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